Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages

Commissariat aux langues officielles

ANNUAL REPORT 2011•2012

© Minister of Public Works and Government Services Canada 2012

Cat. No.: SF1-2012E-PDF
ISSN: 1495-9968

To reach the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages or to obtain a copy in an alternative format, dial toll-free 1-877-996-6368.
www.officiallanguages.gc.ca

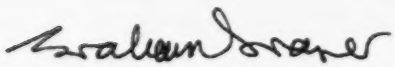
Printed on recycled paper

THE SPEAKER OF THE SENATE
Ottawa

Mr. Speaker,

Pursuant to section 66 of the *Official Languages Act*, I hereby submit to Parliament, through your good offices, the annual report of the Commissioner of Official Languages covering the period from April 1, 2011 to March 31, 2012.

Yours respectfully,



Graham Fraser

THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS
Ottawa

Mr. Speaker,

Pursuant to section 66 of the *Official Languages Act*, I hereby submit to Parliament, through your good offices, the annual report of the Commissioner of Official Languages covering the period from April 1, 2011 to March 31, 2012.

Yours respectfully,

Graham Fraser

Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages

Commissariat aux langues officielles

ANNUAL REPORT 2011•2012

2011–2012 ANNUAL REPORT

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE BY GRAHAM FRASER
FAILURE IS OBVIOUS, SUCCESS IS INVISIBLE II

AWARD OF EXCELLENCE
PROMOTION OF LINGUISTIC DUALITY VIII

INTRODUCTION
LINGUISTIC DUALITY: MADE IN CANADA 2
Unifying force 3
Impact of linguistic duality 4

CHAPTER 1
PROMOTING SECOND-LANGUAGE LEARNING 6
Extraordinary opportunity 7
Advantages of bilingualism 7
Federal government's responsibilities 9
Helping Canadians experience bilingualism 9
Renew federal support for second-language education 11
Learning the other language without changing schools 13

CHAPTER 2

OTTAWA: A TRULY CANADIAN SYMBOL 16
A visitor's experience in Ottawa 18
Arriving at the airport 18
Checking in at the hotel 18
Exploring the city 20
Hitting the shops 20
Goodbye! Au revoir! 21
Federal institutions and linguistic duality 22
Federal institutions and raising awareness among businesses 23
A well-kept secret 24

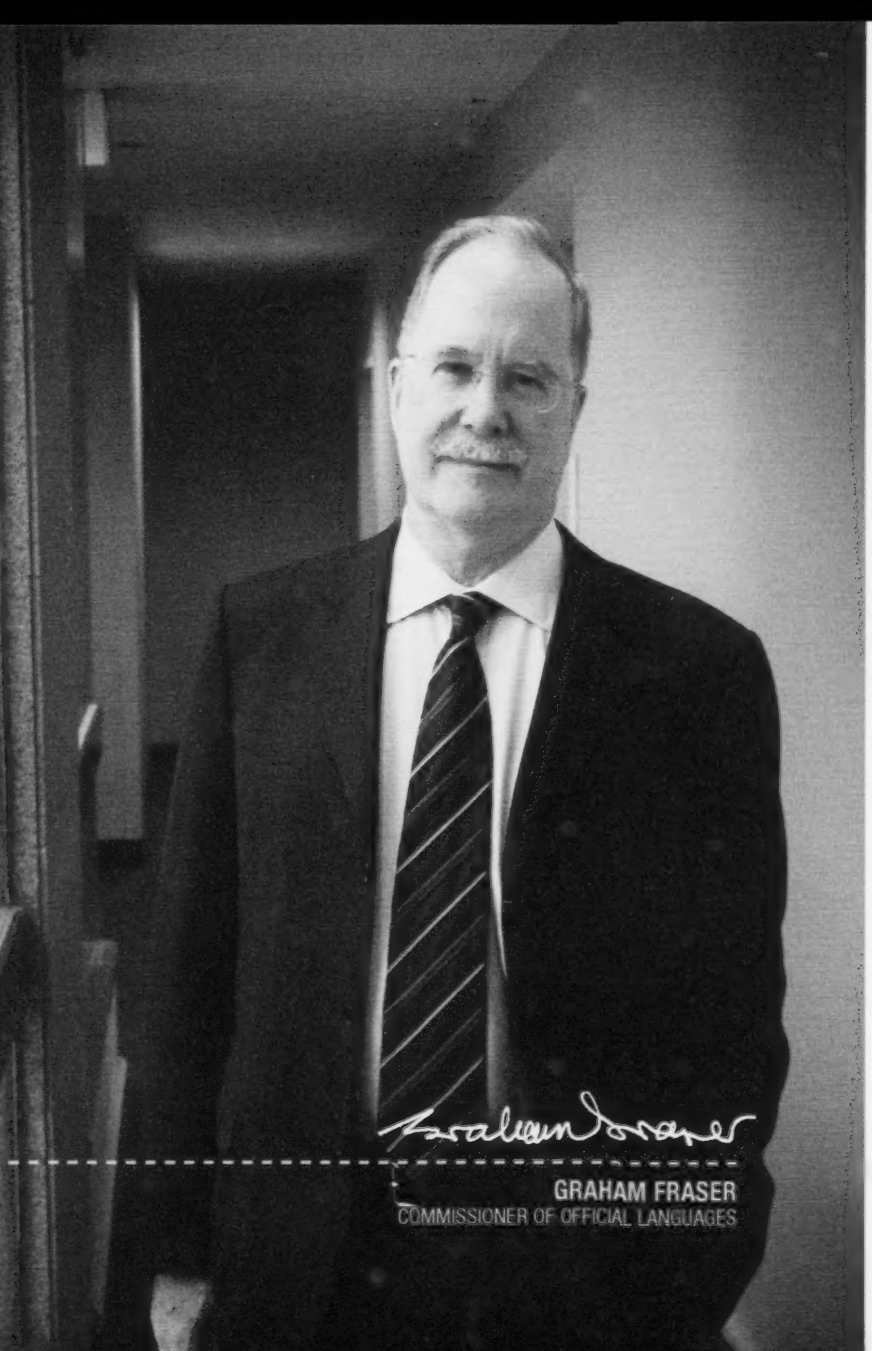
CHAPTER 3

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: GOOD FOR BUSINESS 26
The advantage of serving clients in their own language 27
Gatineau businesses and official languages 27
Building a bilingual organization 29
Bilingualism a sound business choice 29
Second nature 30
One step at a time 30
Cooperation: A win-win scenario 31
Businesses supported by federal institutions 32

CHAPTER 4
FEDERAL INSTITUTIONS AND LINGUISTIC DUALITY 34
Complaints 35
Investigations 36
Controversial appointment 36
Postal terminology in Atlantic Canada 36
Real estate needs of communities 37
Linguistic designation of positions 37
Official languages and the right to vote 38
Canadian Army Web sites 38
Passport Canada goes beyond its obligations 38
Audits 39
Air Canada 39
Parks Canada 39
Industry Canada 40
Court remedies 40
Thibodeau v. Air Canada 40
Commissioner of Official Languages v. CBC/Radio-Canada 41
Meetings with federal institutions 41
Linguistic duality in the public service 42
Linguistic duality in Canadian society 43
Success is no accident 44

CONCLUSION
CANADA'S BILINGUAL IMAGE 46

RECOMMENDATIONS 49



GRAHAM FRASER
COMMISSIONER OF OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

PREFACE
FAILURE IS OBVIOUS, SUCCESS IS INVISIBLE

"You feel more welcomed, you feel more involved, you feel more Canadian,"[1] says Sandra Konji about the benefits of French immersion for immigrant children.

Ms. Konji was born in Nairobi, Kenya, and came to Canada at the age of 6, speaking only English and Swahili. When she was in Grade 5, she went into immersion, and is now planning to study Health Sciences at the University of Ottawa in the French Immersion program. Like many immigrant children who have studied in immersion French, she has emerged from high school with the feeling that she has a better understanding of the country as a whole.

1 Conversation between the Commissioner of Official Languages and Sandra Konji on December 3, 2011.

And yet language policy continues to mystify some Canadians whose families have been in this country for generations. Despite the fact that the *Official Languages Act* is now into its fifth decade, it is still a challenge for some to recognize linguistic duality as a Canadian value and as a key element in Canada's identity. For that understanding to be broadened, it is important that the government do a better job of stressing the importance of Canada's official languages, increasing the opportunities for second-language learning and strengthening the presence of both languages in Canada's capital.

The past year has been one in which language has again been a preoccupation; the year has provided a series of revealing insights into the state of Canadian language policy and linguistic duality.

The summer of 2011 saw renewed public debate on language policy. In July, the Federal Court decision in the *Thibodeau v. Air Canada* case found that Air Canada does, in fact, have a systemic problem providing services in both official languages, and that its obligation to provide service in both languages was not limited by international agreements. Then in August came the news that my office's observations in Ottawa would track the visitor's experience from a federal institution, like the National Gallery or the Parliament Buildings, to restaurants and stores. This was the first time that observations that would be included in my annual report had been discussed 14 months ahead of time, but those observations—the results of which are analyzed in Chapter 2—have proven to be more positive and, I hope, more instructive than many had feared. Our initial intention had been to limit the observations to Ottawa as the capital of the country, but, after a series of consultations and public reactions, we decided to extend the observations to the National Capital Region, including Gatineau.

One of the interesting outcomes of the consultations was the degree of interest demonstrated by the private sector associations on the subject. Our observations produced a snapshot of Ottawa that showed that, while there is substantial bilingual capacity for visitors to Canada's capital, it is often invisible. As the federal government prepares for the celebrations of Canada's 150th anniversary in 2017, it is important to keep in mind the need to ensure that all Canadians can feel that Ottawa is their capital, and that both official languages are public languages: visible and audible in public spaces, not just in federal government buildings.

The autumn of 2011 brought more controversy over the high-profile appointments of two unilingual Canadians: one to the Supreme Court of Canada and the other to the position of Auditor General of Canada. These appointments had a substantial impact on public opinion and contributed to the sense, particularly in Quebec, that the official languages policy had failed, that French was being threatened and that requirements for Francophones were higher than those for Anglophones.

However, the controversy made it clear that the bar for high-profile public appointments is higher than it has ever been before. It is worth noting that the *Edmonton Journal*, the *Calgary Herald* and the *Ottawa Citizen* all agreed that the Auditor General must be bilingual. The discussion also made it clear that there is an expectation, across the country, that those who fill senior positions that require communicating with Canadians from all parts of the country be bilingual.

Unfortunately, these setbacks have obscured a number of successes for bilingualism as far as public officials are concerned. Four decades ago, opponents of the *Official Languages Act* argued that official bilingualism would mean that Western Canadians would have no chance for a career in the federal public service. Now, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court is from Alberta, and spent her previous career in British Columbia; the Chief of the Defence Staff is from Manitoba; and the Clerk of the Privy Council is from Saskatchewan. They are all proficient in both official languages. And, for the first time ever, a majority of provincial premiers are bilingual.

In order to address the challenge of ensuring that there are more bilingual candidates for senior positions, the government could take steps to enlarge the pool. This could be done by dramatically expanding current exchange programs, by creating scholarships for students to study in their second language and by offering language training programs for mid-career progressions in areas where there is a shortage. There are precedents for these kinds of initiatives: when the government felt that there were too many talented students leaving the country and too many talented researchers working outside Canada, it created the Millennium Scholarships and the Canada Research Chairs.

Attitudes towards language policy are different in Canada's two official language communities, and the challenges are different. In English-speaking Canada, the attitude—and thus the challenge—is often indifference. In French-speaking Canada, the attitude—and the challenge to overcome—is linguistic insecurity: the fear that the French language is being threatened.

This concern is intensified at regular intervals with the publication of census figures that show the dramatic growth of population in Western Canada and the smaller percentage that Francophones represent of Canada's population. This trend is natural; it is impossible to welcome 250,000 newcomers to Canada every year and maintain the same percentage of French speakers or, for that matter, English speakers. The vitality of a language community—its cultural energy and power of attraction—is not determined by percentages; the flourishing of a minority, whether in the context of North America, Quebec or the rest of Canada, does not depend on the rate of growth of the majority, but on the collective determination of that minority to thrive.

But the sense of linguistic insecurity is real, as is the belief that French is threatened. The controversies surrounding the Supreme Court and Auditor General appointments, and similar controversies in Quebec concerning unilingual executives at the Caisse de dépôt and the Banque Nationale, are reminiscent of the language battles of the 1950s and early 1960s about the naming of The Queen Elizabeth Hotel and the absence of French-speaking executives at Donald Gordon's Canadian National Railways. Those debates led to the creation of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism in 1963.

Half a century later, while some of the combustible questions of linguistic symbols are similar, the language challenges are very different. Quebec society has developed successful music, television, film and publishing industries.

To a greater extent than ever before, immigrants to Quebec are learning French, French-speaking immigrants are being attracted to official language minority communities across Canada and hundreds of thousands of English-speaking students are doing their primary and secondary studies in French. And yet, as a series of polls have shown, many Quebecers are feeling increasingly disengaged from the rest of Canada.

In this context, all the shortcomings of federal language policy resonate. Failure is obvious, success is invisible. Everyone witnessed the linguistic failure during the cultural component of the Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympic Games opening ceremony; few noticed the successes on the ground. No one has pointed out that a majority of provincial premiers, from three political parties, are bilingual. No one noticed the remarkable linguistic duality of Jack Layton's state funeral. Few are aware of how many ministers—and parliamentarians from all parties, including the top candidates for the leadership of the New Democratic Party—from across Canada are proficient in both languages.

One reason that these facts are so little known is that there is so little effort made to highlight them. How many bilingual Anglophone ministers or generals or ambassadors have appeared on *Tout le monde en parle*, or spoken to the Trois-Rivières chamber of commerce? How many bilingual Francophone ministers or businessmen or filmmakers are invited to speak at Canadian Clubs across the country?

This past year produced an extraordinary crop of French-language films from Quebec. But how many Canadians outside Quebec have had the chance to see *Monsieur Lazhar* (Academy Award nominee and Genie winner for best film, best director, best actor, best supporting actress, best editing and best adapted screenplay), *Starbuck* (Genie winner for best original screenplay and best song) and *Café de Flore* (Genie award for best actress, best make-up and best visual effects)? Often, Air Canada flights are the only places Canadians can see Canadian films with any regularity. Canadians everywhere should be able to see these remarkable films.

Similarly, recognizing that proficiency in both official languages is a critical leadership competency, ministers, deputies and heads of federal agencies—just like thousands of public service employees—have worked hard to become proficient in both official languages. To what extent are they using those skills to communicate publicly with Canadians?

Ultimately, the future of Canada's linguistic duality depends on two factors: the degree to which English-speaking Quebecers and French-speaking Canadians outside Quebec are able to maintain a strong, vital linguistic environment in which they can live their lives fully in their language, and the degree to which Canada's majority communities—French-speaking in Quebec, English-speaking in the rest of Canada—embrace Canada's linguistic duality as a key element in Canadian identity, whether or not they speak both official languages.

This does not mean, and has never meant, that all Canadians should be bilingual or that they should feel less of a Canadian if they speak only English or only French. But it does mean that they should welcome the presence of the other official language and see it as a key symbol of their country's identity. In other words, English and French are not foreign languages in Canada, they are Canadian languages.

To an ever-greater extent, some Canadian businesses have understood this. Rogers Communications has made a significant effort to ensure that its customers can be served and its employees trained in the language of their choice. There is an official languages committee, formed of half management and half staff, that meets every week. The result? With 30 million calls a year to its call centres, the company has had only two complaints over the past two years about language of service. As Garrick Tiplady, Senior Vice-President, Customer Experience explained to me, "Offering services in both languages is in the DNA of the company, simply part of doing business in a bilingual country. When it works well, nobody notices; that's the best possible outcome."[2]

Success is invisible, failure is obvious.

But to succeed, Canadians need to have greater access to language learning opportunities and a better understanding of official language minority communities, including their culture and their institutions. That will lead to the knowledge that, for example, the French-speaking communities outside Quebec are not simply French-Canadian in origin, but European, African, Caribbean, Asian and North African; that the English-speaking communities in the Gaspé and the Eastern Townships are very different from the English-speaking communities in Montréal.

As McGill University Professor Emeritus Charles Taylor said, "language is much more than communication, it's a communion. [translation]"[3]

Canadians need to have a sense of ownership of both languages, whether they speak them or not. To do that, they need to know that they have access to the other language and the other cultures that are expressed in that language. In five years, when Canadians celebrate their country's 150th anniversary, they should be able to celebrate Canada's linguistic duality—and enjoy its presence—across the country.

2 Meeting between the Commissioner of Official Languages and Garrick Tiplady on January 24, 2012.

3 Mauricio Segura, "L'homme qui plantait des idées," *L'actualité*, March 9, 2012. On-line version (www.lactualite.com/societe/lhomme-qui-plantait-des-idees?page=0,2) accessed March 31, 2012 [French only].

BERNARD ST-LAURENT
JOURNALIST AND BROADCASTER

AWARD OF EXCELLENCE
PROMOTION OF LINGUISTIC DUALITY

Created by the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages in 2009, the Award of Excellence—Promotion of Linguistic Duality is given to an individual or organization that is not subject to the federal *Official Languages Act* but that promotes linguistic duality in Canada or abroad or contributes to the development of Canada's official language minority communities.

This year's recipient of the Award of Excellence is veteran journalist and broadcaster Bernard St-Laurent. Bernie, as he is known to his friends and listeners, is a communicator *extraordinaire* who has dedicated his life to keeping English-speaking Canadians informed of what's happening in the other official language.

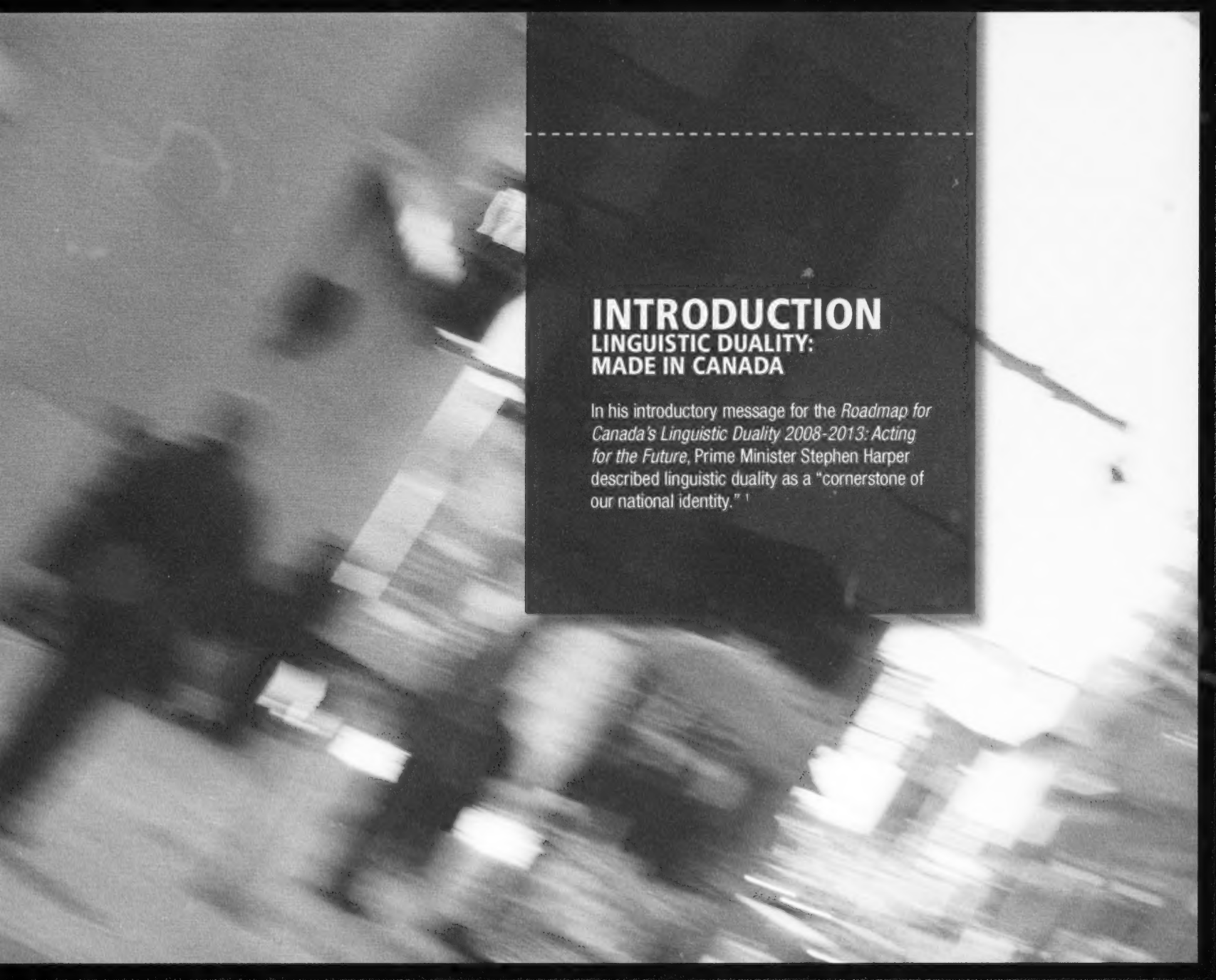
Bernie was introduced to the worlds of politics and journalism when he was a young boy in Compton, Quebec. His great uncle was Louis St-Laurent, then Prime Minister of Canada. When Uncle Louis visited the family general store, reporters would always follow him around. That experience would be prescient later in Bernie's life.

As a young man, he co-founded a weekly paper for the English-speaking communities of Gaspé—The Gaspé Spec—that is still being published today. As the years went by and opportunities knocked, he went on to work for *The Globe & Mail*, CJAD, *The Montreal Daily News*, *The Gazette*, The Weather Network and MétéoMédia, and CBC.

In 1998, he co-created *C'est la vie*, an award-winning CBC radio program that showcases Francophone culture across the country, exploring arts and culture, sports, science and business. After more than 14 years, *C'est la vie* is still as immensely popular as it was on day one.

Apart from hosting *C'est la vie* and *Radio Noon Montreal*, Bernie is CBC's senior political editor in Quebec. During election campaigns, he is a regular analyst on *Le Téléjournal*, Radio-Canada's primetime television newscast. Bernie has also appeared as a guest host on various CBC radio shows, including *The Current*, *Sounds Like Canada*, *As It Happens*, *The House* and *Cross Country Checkup*.

The Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages congratulates Bernard St-Laurent for his outstanding work in promoting Canada's linguistic duality throughout his remarkable career.



INTRODUCTION
LINGUISTIC DUALITY: MADE IN CANADA

In his introductory message for the *Roadmap for Canada's Linguistic Duality 2008-2013: Acting for the Future*, Prime Minister Stephen Harper described linguistic duality as a "cornerstone of our national identity." [1]

The reason linguistic duality is an essential part of Canada's identity and one of the country's core values is that it is so very tightly woven into the fabric of Canadian society. Canada is populated mainly by people who speak English or French, just as it was almost 150 years ago when the *British North America Act* was signed.[2] According to 2006 Census figures,[3] more than 7 million Canadians speak French as their first official language and over 23 million speak English.[4]

While most French-speaking Canadians live in Quebec, close to 1 million live elsewhere in the country. Similarly, while most English-speaking Canadians live outside Quebec, nearly 1 million Quebecers speak English as their first language.

Immigrants make up a significant part of Canada's English- and French-speaking population. Nearly 70% of immigrants claim to have a good knowledge of English four years after arriving in Canada. After four years in Quebec, 73% of immigrants report being able to speak French well.[5]

UNIFYING FORCE

Linguistic duality is a fundamental Canadian value. The great majority of Canadians think that it is important to live in a country where English and French stand shoulder to shoulder. Nearly 6 in 10 Canadians think that the *Official Languages Act* is good for Canadian unity[6] and that linguistic duality is a unifying force for Canada. Nearly half of all Canadians think that official bilingualism is a key element of national identity.[7]

Canadians show their support for linguistic duality in many different ways. One of these is evident in the popularity of second-official-language learning support programs for young Canadians. In fact, 71% of Canadians living outside Quebec agree that French should be compulsory in all elementary schools, while 68% think it should be compulsory in high school.[8]

1 Canadian Heritage, "Message from the Prime Minister of Canada," *Roadmap for Canada's linguistic duality 2008-2013: Acting for the future*, Ottawa, 2008, p. 4. On-line version (www.pch.gc.ca/slo-ols/pubs/08-13-LDL/101-eng.cfm) accessed March 31, 2012.

2 Although Canada's Aboriginal languages are also central to the Canadian identity, the Canadian constitution does not recognize any of them as official languages.

3 The results of the 2011 Census had not been made public at the time of this report.

4 Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, *Official languages in Canada*, March 2012. On-line version (www.officiallanguages.gc.ca/html/canada_06_e.php) accessed March 31, 2012.

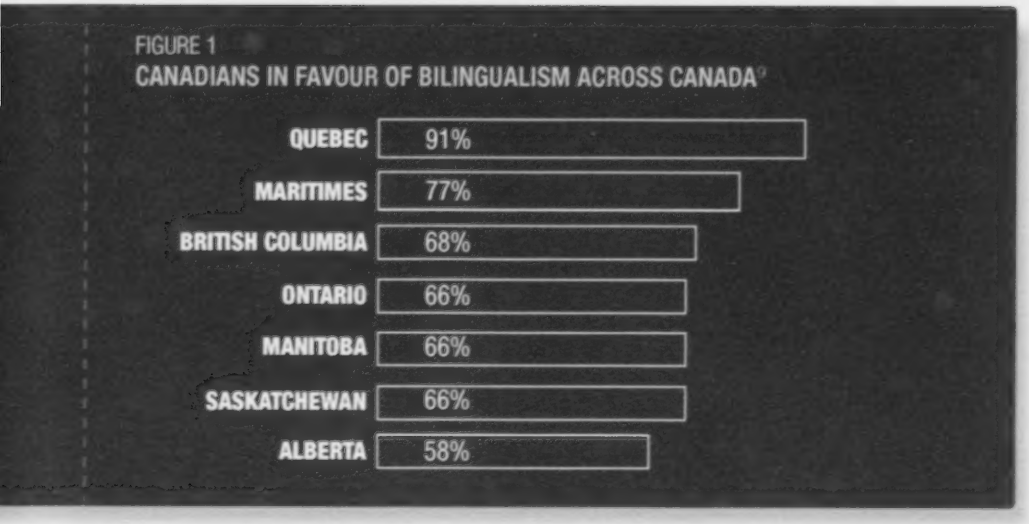
5 Statistics Canada, *Knowledge of official languages among new immigrants: How important is it in the labour market?*, Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 89-624-XIE, Ottawa, 2007, pp. 6 and 15. On-line versions (www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/89-624-x/2007000/4123709-eng.htm and www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/89-624-x/2007000/4123753-eng.htm) accessed March 31, 2012.

6 Jack Jedwab and Sidd Bannerjee, *Pillars of unity: Of Canada's principal identity-based legislation, rights charter remains most popular*, Montréal, Association for Canadian Studies, 2010, p. 2. On-line version (www.acs-aec.ca/pdf/polls/12651222568208.doc) accessed March 31, 2012.

7 Environics Institute, *Focus Canada 2010*, Toronto, 2010, p. 17. On-line version (www.environicsinstitute.org/PDF-FocusCanada2010.pdf) accessed March 31, 2012.

8 CROP, *Les Canadiens et le bilinguisme*, Final report for the Société Radio-Canada, December 2006, p. 13. On-line version (www.radio-canada.ca/actualite/enprofondeur/desautels/bilinguisme/src-crop_bilinguisme.pdf) accessed March 31, 2012 [French only].

FIGURE 1
CANADIANS IN FAVOUR OF BILINGUALISM ACROSS CANADA[9]



Canadians also think that major sports and cultural events in Canada, such as the Olympic Games, should be held in both official languages, and that politicians' speeches should be given in a combination of English and French, regardless of where they are in Canada.[10] Most Canadians (81%) think that bilingualism should be compulsory for senior federal public officials.[11]

IMPACT OF LINGUISTIC DUALITY

The importance of linguistic duality has long been recognized in Canadian law. *The Constitution Act, 1867* stated that the records and journals of both houses of Parliament must be written in both English and French.[12] The 1969 *Official Languages Act* was a response to one of the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism (1963–1971). The 1982 *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* stipulated that "English and French are the official languages of Canada and have equality of status and equal rights and privileges as to their use in all institutions of the Parliament and government of Canada."[13] The 1988 *Official Languages Act* committed the government of Canada to fostering the full recognition and use of both English and French in Canadian society and enhancing the

9 Canadian Heritage, "Official languages: Facts and figures," *Report on Government of Canada consultations on linguistic duality and official languages*, February 2008, p. 5. On-line version (www.pch.gc.ca/pc-ch/conslttn/lo-ol_2008/lord/index-eng.cfm#jmp-lan2) accessed March 31, 2012.

10 Vision Critical / Angus Reid, *Large majority of Quebecers disagrees with Bernier on Bill 101*, Public opinion poll conducted for *La Presse*, February 9-10, 2011, p. 3. On-line version (www.visioncritical.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/02/2011.02.14_Bilingual_CAN.pdf) accessed March 31, 2012.

11 CROP, *Les Canadiens et le bilinguisme*, p. 31.

12 *The Constitution Act, 1867*, 30 & 31 Vict., c. 3, s. 133. On-line version (http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/Const/FullText.html) accessed March 31, 2012.

13 *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, Part I of *The Constitution Act, 1982* being Schedule B to the *Canada Act 1982* (U.K.), 1982, c. 11., s. 16(1). On-line version (http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/Charter/FullText.html) accessed March 31, 2012.

vitality of official language minority communities in Canada and supporting and assisting their development.[14]

These laws were adopted because they reflected the image of Canada at the time and the vision that most Canadians had of their country. They continue to resonate today because linguistic duality is still a strong factor in Canada's development and in how this country is seen by both its citizens and its visitors.

Canada is slowly changing under the influence of immigration and globalization. Some things are not changing, however, such as the fact that there are two languages—English and French—at the heart of Canadian identity. It is important for the federal government, other levels of government, organizations, businesses and individual Canadians to celebrate linguistic duality and make it part of their daily lives.

OUTLINE OF THE 2011–2012 ANNUAL REPORT

CHAPTER 1
How to increase the number of bilingual Canadians

CHAPTER 2
How visitors are being greeted in English and French in the nation's capital

CHAPTER 3
How businesses are promoting linguistic duality and reaping the benefits

CHAPTER 4
How federal institutions are strengthening the status of English and French

14 *Official Languages Act*, R.S.C. 1985, c. 31 (4th Supp.), s. 41(1). On-line version (http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/O-3.01/FullText.html) accessed March 31, 2012.

PAUL DAVIS
CANADIAN FASHION DESIGNER

CHAPTER 1
PROMOTING SECOND-LANGUAGE LEARNING

"I'm convinced that had I not learned French as a second language, I would never have been able to meet the challenge of learning German. When I was immersed in the French-speaking world of Quebec, something clicked in my brain. I now know that, wherever I go, I'll be able to learn the language. [translation]" Paul Davis

EXTRAORDINARY OPPORTUNITY

"It is an incredible opportunity for people [to] master both the English and French languages—which are two strong and powerful languages throughout the world," says Pape Ousmane Sine, a young multilingual Afro-Canadian who lives in Atlantic Canada. "And having this proficiency, as well as a country with an international reputation for being bilingual, is an incredible privilege. [translation]"[1]

Most Canadians agree with Mr. Sine: 70% of English-Canadians wish they were more proficient in French,[2] and 90% of French-Canadians think that learning English is valuable if you want to travel, get a better job or explore other cultures.[3]

Many Canadian immigrants whose first language is neither English nor French believe that it is important to speak both of Canada's official languages. For example, although they are surprised at the lack of French spoken in their area, "recent immigrants [to Alberta] still want their children to learn both official languages and aspire to pick up the languages themselves."[4]

ADVANTAGES OF BILINGUALISM

Millions of Canadians believe that there is an advantage to being fluent in English and French, and with good reason.

Bilingualism gives people a competitive edge in the Canadian job market. For example, in Quebec, CEGEP and university graduates who speak both official languages at work earn upwards of 5% more than those who do not, and this is only five years after graduating.[5] Outside Quebec, knowledge of French is sometimes considered to be an asset for people who are looking for work. Out of 107 Monster.ca job postings for people with 10 or more years' experience looking to work in Toronto, five were for executive positions where fluency in both official languages was listed as a requirement or an asset.[6]

Bilingual employees often have greater job mobility than unilingual staff. Bilingual Francophones can take advantage of employment opportunities created by the natural resources boom in Western Canada and in the territories. Bilingual Anglophones can fit right into professional environments where French is preferred or required. "[Say] you live in Kelowna and you're starting a family there," explains Robert Rothon, National Executive Director of Canadian Parents for French. "Living in the middle of British Columbia, it doesn't really seem to matter whether your young children can speak French. One day, however, they may very well decide to move to another part of Canada or

1 Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, *Languages*, video produced as part of the Discussion Forum on the Perspectives of Canadians of Diverse Backgrounds on Linguistic Duality, November 2011. On-line version (www.youtube.com/watch?v=m6aXr1RLXSI) accessed March 31, 2012.

2 Angus Reid Strategies public opinion poll, September 12–13, 2007, *Bilingualism: English-speaking Canadians lack solid French skills, but value bilingualism*, p. 2. On-line version (www.angus-reid.com/wp-content/uploads/archived-pdf/2007.09.25%20Bilingualism%20Press%20Release.pdf) accessed March 31, 2012.

3 CROP, *Les Canadiens et le bilinguisme*, Final report for the Société Radio-Canada, December 2006, pp. 27-28. On-line version (www.radio-canada.ca/actualite/enprofondeur/desautels/bilinguisme/src-crop_bilinguisme.pdf) accessed March 31, 2012 [French only].

4 Sarah Boesveld, "'If you're Canadian, why aren't you bilingual?' new immigrants wonder," *National Post*, June 2, 2011. On-line version (http://news.nationalpost.com/2011/06/02/if-youre-canadian-why-arent-you-bilingual-new-immigrants-wonder) accessed March 31, 2012.

5 Brahim Boudarbat and Claude Montmarquette, "Payant, être bilingue," *La Presse*, January 21, 2012. On-line version (www.cyberpresse.ca/debats/opinions/201201/20/01-4487904-payant-etre-bilingue.php) accessed March 31, 2012 [French only]. Researchers used data provided in 2005 by people who graduated in 2000.

6 On March 8, 2012, the executive positions listed on Monster.ca were: Director of Marketing and Communications, Freight and Logistics Manager, Database Administrator, Senior Manager of Marketing and Communications, and Project Control Manager.

even to another country, and they'll find themselves wanting or having to work in a community where French is spoken. Giving your children the chance to become bilingual will greatly improve their job mobility. [translation]"[7]

Bilingualism also opens doors for people who want to work abroad or travel overseas for work. Knowing the English language is a valuable passport for French-speaking Canadians working in fields like finance, aerospace science or leading-edge research. English-speaking Canadians who speak French find their language skills very useful when travelling or working abroad, especially in countries like Belgium and Senegal, and the other 26 countries where French is an official language, as well as in countries like Tunisia[8] or Portugal,[9] where French is relatively common. They can also find work in organizations or fields where French is important.

"I believe that we Canadians are extremely fortunate to have the two most predominant languages of the fashion industry at our fingertips,"[10] says Paul Davis, an English-Canadian from Victoria who learned to speak French in Montréal, where he was studying design. When he moved to Paris, Mr. Davis quickly realized that being bilingual was essential in his chosen field: "I have witnessed many hopefuls, some of them wildly talented, turned away due to a lack of proficiency in both English and French."[11]

Three years ago, Mr. Davis moved to Berlin to make his mark. "I'm convinced that had I not learned French as a second language, I would never have been able to meet the challenge of learning German," says Mr. Davis. "When I was immersed in the French-speaking world of Quebec, something clicked in my brain. I now know that, wherever I go, I'll be able to learn the language. [translation]"

Knowing Canada's two official languages not only provides professional and financial benefits, it also gives Canadians an opportunity to expand their personal horizons. "Like many other kids in Ottawa . . . I started learning a second language at age 4, when I was enrolled in French immersion school,"[12] says writer Melanie Ho, who now lives in Asia. Ms. Ho sees her knowledge of French as a professional benefit. As a reporter in 2008, she was assigned to cover the Olympic equestrian events, where her French skills enhanced her ability to communicate with the French equestrian team. Earlier this year she also worked with a French start-up company in Hong Kong. "But learning a

7 Unless otherwise indicated, all quotations cited in this chapter were obtained by e-mail or during telephone interviews conducted between December 16, 2011, and March 31, 2012.

8 An estimated 30% of Tunisians speak French to varying degrees. See Jacques Leclerc, "Tunisie," in *L'aménagement linguistique dans le monde*, Québec City, Université Laval, 2011. On-line version (www.tlfq.ulaval.ca/axl/afrique/tunisie.htm) accessed March 31, 2012 [French only].

9 In Portugal, 24% of the population report being conversant in French and 32% in English. See Eurobarometer, *Europeans and their languages*, Brussels, February 2006, p. 13. On-line version (http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_243_en.pdf) accessed March 31, 2012.

10 Paul Davis, "Bilingualism in fashion," *Beyond Words*, November 21, 2011. On-line version (www.officiallanguages.gc.ca/newsletter_cyberbulletin/21_11_2011/content_contenu_e.htm) accessed March 31, 2012.

11 Paul Davis, "Bilingualism in fashion."

12 Melanie Ho, "The rise of the polyglots," *The New York Times*, January 29, 2012. On-line version (www.nytimes.com/roomfordebate/2012/01/29/is-learning-a-language-other-than-english-worthwhile/more-foreign-languages-means-more-opportunities) accessed March 31, 2012.

new tongue is important beyond that," Ms. Ho explains. "Language provides insight into another way of thinking, another mind-set. . . . Maybe you don't need to be fluent in multiple languages, but life might be more interesting if you were proficient in more than one."[13]

The fact that Canada has a large pool of people who can speak both official languages also contributes to its economic development and to its vitality. Bilingual Canadians play a crucial role in bridging the gap between the country's unilingual English speakers and French speakers. They can help their own linguistic majority to understand the other group, and they help the federal government to function effectively in both official languages.

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSIBILITIES

Since the passing of the *Official Languages Act*, the Government of Canada has committed to promoting English and French second-language learning by creating the Federal-Provincial Program for Cooperation for the Promotion of Bilingualism in Education. This and other subsequent initiatives have helped to increase the number of Canadians who can speak both official languages. In fact, 12% of English-speaking Canadians between the ages of 20 and 24 living outside of Quebec report knowing both official languages, compared to only 5% of those between the ages of 60 and 64, who did not have access to such programs.[14] Overall, however, the proportion of bilingual Canadians remains low at 17%.[15]

The federal government therefore needs to increase its efforts to support second-language learning in Canadian society. Specifically, it should ensure that young Canadians have more opportunities to participate in language exchanges and practise what they have learned.

HELPING CANADIANS EXPERIENCE BILINGUALISM

Second-official-language education is essential at the elementary, high school, college and university levels. It also needs to happen outside of the classroom in order to spark the interest of students, inspire them to become bilingual and help them maintain their skills.[16]

"Too often, French second-language students only speak French with their teacher," says Max Cooke, Canadian Parents for French (Ontario) board member, Vice-President of French for the Future and Director of Communications of the Canadian Education Association. "Most don't use it with their friends and they don't use it at home, so they don't understand why they need it. To convince these kids to value and nurture their emerging bilingualism as an invaluable life skill, we have to build their intrinsic motivation to learn French. We need to provide them with more exposure to Francophone culture. For example, I was in Grade 8 when my class went on a student exchange to the Lac-Saint-Jean region of Quebec. For a whole week, I lived with a family that didn't speak English and interacted with my unilingual Francophone peers. This was when I realized that I had a window into another culture and

13 Melanie Ho, "The rise of the polyglots."

14 Statistics Canada, "Figure 3: Rate of English-French bilingualism among Anglophones by age groups, Canada less Quebec, 1996 to 2006," in *The evolving linguistic portrait, 2006 Census*, Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 97-555-XIE, Ottawa, 2007, p. 27. On-line version (www12.statcan.ca/census-recensement/2006/as-sa/97-555/figures/c3-eng.cfm) accessed March 31, 2012.

15 Canadian Heritage, *Report on Government of Canada consultations on linguistic duality and official languages*, Ottawa, 2008, Figure 1. On-line version (www.pch.gc.ca/pc-ch/conslttn/lo-ol_2008/lord/index-eng.cfm) accessed March 31, 2012.

16 Jacques Saindon, Rodrigue Landry and Fadila Boutouchent, "Anglophones majoritaires et français langue seconde au Canada : effets complémentaires de la scolarisation et de l'environnement social," *Canadian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, vol. 14, no. 1, 2011, p. 79. On-line version (http://ojs.vre.upei.ca/index.php/cjal/article/view/131/968) accessed March 31, 2012 [French only].

a gift that few other kids had. This was so empowering that it changed my life! Don't try to convince young people that learning French as a second language is important. Get them to experience it for themselves."

There are a number of programs in Canada that help young people to discover the value of bilingualism for themselves. The Explore program, funded by Canadian Heritage and managed by the Council of Ministers of Education (Canada), enables young Canadians to visit another part of the country for five weeks and strengthen their second-official-language skills by taking courses at an academic institution. The YMCA Youth Summer Work Student Exchange Program, a Canadian Heritage and VIA Rail Canada initiative, gives 16- and 17-year-old Canadian students the opportunity to learn English or French as a second language, to discover Canada's other language community, and to gain work experience that will help them when they eventually enter the job market. The PÉLIQ-AN program, which was created following a Canada-Quebec bilateral agreement, encourages communication between English- and French-speaking students in Quebec and allows students to practise their second official language. Other programs, such as the now defunct Katimavik, may not necessarily focus on promoting linguistic duality, but still make it possible for young Canadians to participate in exchanges and develop their English or French second-language skills.

There are not nearly enough opportunities, however, for young Canadians to participate in a language exchange through which they can spend several days, weeks or months using their second language in an intensive learning environment. According to the Council of Ministers of Education (Canada), "every year close to 20,000 people want to participate in a program that gives them this opportunity, but only 8,000 actually get a spot. [translation]"

This situation needs to be rectified. As the Commissioner of Official Languages recommended in the study, *Two languages, a world of opportunities: Second-language learning in Canada's universities*, and reiterated in various speeches, the federal government and its partners should establish the Canadian equivalent of the European Union's ambitious Erasmus Programme. Since its creation 25 years ago, Erasmus has enabled nearly 2.5 million European students and teachers to study or teach abroad while learning or perfecting another language at the same time.

The idea of establishing this kind of program in Canada generated a great deal of interest among participants at the Manitoba Forum on the Continuum of Second-language Learning Opportunities, organized by the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages in November 2010. According to many participants, "[e]xchanges, especially in the Canadian context, are also a great way to demystify second-language learning. . . . [T]he fear of failure must not be overlooked as a factor that can discourage students from pursuing second-language learning."[17] Creating a Canadian Erasmus program would also help resolve the current situation wherein it is often more difficult for Canadian students to participate in a language exchange with a post-secondary institution in their own country than with a college or university in another country.

At the high school level, Canada should establish an initiative similar to the European Union's Comenius Programme, which gives secondary school students (age 14 and up) and student teachers the chance to go on a long-term exchange (three to ten months).

17 Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, *Report on the Manitoba forum on the continuum of second-language learning opportunities: Follow-up to the study* Two languages, a world of opportunities: Second-language learning in Canada's universities, Ottawa, 2011, p. 3. On-line version (www.officiallanguages.gc.ca/html/rmfc_rfmc_e.php) accessed March 31, 2012.

INTENSIVE SECOND-LANGUAGE LEARNING IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL: ANOTHER WINNING STRATEGY

The Intensive French program, created in Newfoundland and Labrador in 1998, gives students in Grade 5 or 6 three to five more hours of French second-language learning than the normal curriculum. For half of the ten-month school year, students focus mainly on intensive French. For the other half of the year, students follow their regular curriculum (history, science, etc.) in English, but in a compacted format, and resume their core French classes. Math is taught throughout the year in English.

This is a winning approach. A study of 30 Grade 5 classes found that 72% of students enrolled in an intensive French program could speak with some spontaneity in French, compared with 2% of students who had taken core French since the beginning of elementary school.[18] Students in intensive French programs also have a more positive perception of French and often choose to continue their French studies in high school. This kind of program now exists in 12 of Canada's 13 provinces and territories. In 2009–2010, 8,000 students participated in 369 intensive French classes across the country.[19]

By 2015–2016, Quebec students attending French schools will study intensive English in the second half of Grade 6. Quebec's education minister has created several working groups to ensure that everything goes smoothly as the new program is introduced. One of these groups will examine how to recruit experienced English second-language teachers, while another will work to build close ties between the English and French school boards.[20]

RENEW FEDERAL SUPPORT FOR SECOND-LANGUAGE EDUCATION

The *Roadmap for Canada's Linguistic Duality 2008-2013: Acting for the Future* recognizes the importance of increasing the level of bilingualism among young Canadians and sets out federal investments of some $8 million a year for language exchanges.[21]

These programs are working. A study conducted by the Society for Educational Visits and Exchanges in Canada found that students who had participated in short-term exchanges "viewed the exchange as an opportunity; have confidence in their language abilities; continue to use their second language; choose leisure activities that help to maintain their language; and seek and take opportunities for second language use."[22]

18 Joan Netten and Claude Germain, *Presentation to Canadian Heritage*, October 2010.

19 Joan Netten and Claude Germain, *Presentation to Canadian Heritage*.

20 Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport, *Enseignement intensif de l'anglais, langue seconde, au primaire - La ministre Beauchamp s'assure d'une implantation efficace*, News Release, Québec City, September 16, 2011. On-line version (www.mels.gouv.qc.ca/ministere/info/index.asp?page=communiques&id=1202) accessed March 31, 2012 [French only].

21 Canadian Heritage, *Roadmap for Canada's linguistic duality 2008-2013: Acting for the future – Mid-term report*, 2011. On-line version (www.pch.gc.ca/pgm/slo-ols/pubs/08-13-ldl/rmp-mtr2012-eng.cfm) accessed March 31, 2012.

22 Society for Educational Visits and Exchanges in Canada, *English-French school group exchanges in Canada and their long term impact*, Ottawa, 2009, p. 1. On-line version (www.sevec.ca/upload/Research-English-French%20School%20Group%20Exchanges%20in%20Canada%20and%20Their%20Long-Term%20Impact%202009%20EN.pdf) accessed March 31, 2012.

BUSINESSES CAN ALSO PROMOTE LANGUAGE IMMERSION

In 2012, the Commissioner of Official Languages participated in the Molson Foundation immersion scholarships award ceremony for the fifth time. Each year, the Molson Foundation gives $5,000 to five English-speaking Canadians from outside of Quebec to enable them to pursue their undergraduate university studies in French at Université Laval. The immersion scholarships were created in 2005 through a $500,000 donation by the Molson Foundation. In the Commissioner's words, they "highlight the importance of the private sector's participation in promoting the linguistic duality of our country."[23]

Businesses, the federal government and other levels of government also benefit from these exchanges because they need bilingual employees to effectively respond to the needs and expectations of Canadians and to ensure that their operations are productive.

The Commissioner of Official Languages therefore believes that the federal government's next five-year official languages plan should not simply maintain the status quo regarding language exchange programs. To maximize the positive effect of exchanges on young Canadians and on Canadian society as a whole, the government needs to go further. Many more short- and long-term exchanges are needed so that Canada can fully celebrate its linguistic duality at its 150th birthday in 2017.

RECOMMENDATION 1

The Commissioner of Official Languages recommends that, in the run-up to Canada's 150th birthday, the Prime Minister take the necessary measures to double the number of young Canadians who participate each year in short- and long-term language exchanges at the high-school and post-secondary levels.

23 Commissioner of Official Languages, *Speaking notes for the Molson Foundation immersion scholarships award ceremony*, Québec City, January 12, 2012. On-line version (www.officiallanguages.gc.ca/html/speech_discours_12012012_e.php) accessed March 31, 2012.

LEARNING THE OTHER LANGUAGE WITHOUT CHANGING SCHOOLS

Although exchanges are important, participants at the Manitoba Forum on the Continuum of Second-language Learning Opportunities said that post-secondary institutions should also improve their own English or French second-language courses, as well as other courses taught in the second official language. These courses "are often perceived as the sole responsibility of the arts or education faculties . . . [however,] proficiency in both official languages is an added value in many fields and should therefore be reflected in a wider range of programs."[24]

Some institutions and teachers already understand this. Ian Greene, Caroline Dufour and Diane Woody, three professors at Toronto's York University, recently created the *French for Public Administration* course to help graduate and undergraduate students in disciplines such as political science and health service management acquire knowledge of public administration and the French language at the same time. This course is also intended for people who have knowledge of the field of public administration, such as federal employees, and want to improve their understanding of the French language in the workplace. "I learned French many years ago when, as an undergraduate student in political science, I started translating texts from *Le Devoir*," says Professor Greene. "That quickly helped me master the vocabulary I needed to read specialized journals in my field or watch news in both official languages. So I thought that by applying a similar method, by building a French-only public administration course that would make students focus on the vocabulary they really need on the job, we would help them in their careers more than if we offered them any other type of French course. This course really fills a need because demand is very heavy."

COMMISSIONER'S ACTIVITIES

In 2011–2012, the Commissioner of Official Languages participated in a variety of activities to promote the fact that learning Canada's other official language is an advantage for young Canadians and that it is important for them to have as many opportunities as possible to hone their skills in English or French. Recently, the Commissioner was the closing speaker at an academic forum entitled *Immersion at the university level: Models, challenges and prospects,* held in February 2012 and organized by the Official Languages and Bilingualism Institute of the University of Ottawa.

He also met with senior officials at a number of Canadian universities, including the University of Calgary, the University of New Brunswick, St. Thomas University, Dalhousie University, the University of Waterloo, Université Laval, the University of Manitoba, the University of Winnipeg and the University of Windsor, to discuss issues related to second-language learning opportunities at the post-secondary level.

24 Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, *Report on the Manitoba forum*, p. 5.

In Manitoba, an interesting project promises to strengthen law students' French skills. With funding from the Department of Justice, the University of Manitoba's Faculty of Law will soon offer a program that features required and optional courses in French for aspiring lawyers who want to become proficient in French legal terminology. The program will also enable law students to take Common Law courses in French.[25]

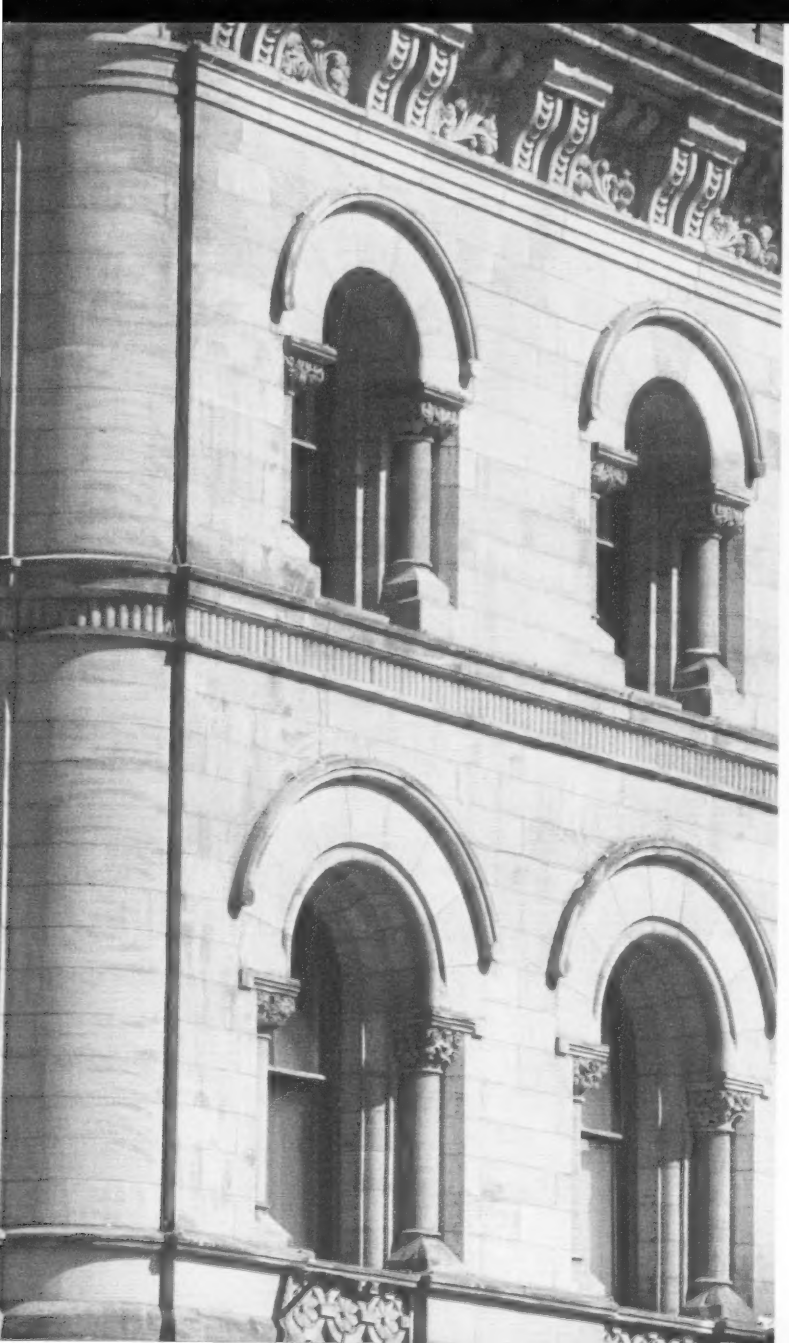
In Quebec, French-language post-secondary institutions are offering students more and more opportunities to register for programs that include some courses in English. For example, students in the French-language Risk and Insurance Management program—part of the Université Laval Bachelor of Business Administration—can take "Risk Management and Insurance" and "Risk Assessment" in English.

Post-secondary institutions across the country will need to offer more of these kinds of programs so that linguistic duality can become a commonplace experience for future generations.

RECOMMENDATION 2

The Commissioner of Official Languages recommends that the Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages work together with provincial and territorial governments as well as post-secondary institutions to increase the number of programs in which students can take courses in their second official language.

25 Department of Justice, *Government of Canada provides funding to support use of both official languages in the justice system*, News Release, Ottawa, November 30, 2011. On-line version (www.justice.gc.ca/eng/news-nouv/nr-cp/2011/doc_32673.html) accessed March 31, 2012.



CHAPTER 2
OTTAWA: A TRULY CANADIAN SYMBOL

Over 40 years ago, the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism reported that Canada's capital "should be regarded as the property of neither Francophone nor Anglophone Canadians, but as the product of the fruitful collaboration of both, as a symbol of the things they have in common."[1] The capital "should express, in the best way possible, the values of the country as a whole, its way of life, its cultural richness and diversity, its social outlook, its aspirations for the future. . . . Citizens from across the country who visit their capital should find in it a fuller understanding of their country's traditions and a pride in personal identification with it. Similarly, visitors from other countries should be able just as readily to find tangible expression of [Canadian] values . . . ."[2] Everyone should feel as though English and French have "full equality of status" in Ottawa.[3]

1 Report of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, *Book V: The federal capital*, Ottawa, Queen's Printer, 1970, p. 31. On-line version (http://epe.lac-bac.gc.ca/100/200/301/pco-bcp/commissions-ef/dunton1967-1970-ef/dunton1967-70-vol5-eng/dunton1967-70-vol5-part1-eng.pdf) accessed on March 31, 2012.

2 Report of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, p. 3.

3 Report of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, p. 41.

In 1970, the Royal Commission felt that there was still more work to be done before this could become a reality. Its research showed that, "in economic and professional services in the capital . . . English [was] the predominant language; such services [were] almost universally available in English, but far from universally available in French. . . . In important aspects of daily life, shopping, and professional services, members of the Francophone community [often had to] make an extra effort in order to obtain services at all . . . ."[4]

Four decades later, do the words of the Royal Commission still describe the language situation in Ottawa? Has anything changed? Are English and French now on equal footing in Canada's capital?

Some people do not think so. In 2007, *Journal de Montréal* columnist Richard Martineau wrote: "If it's true that a country's capital is supposed to embody the spirit of that country, then there is no doubt about it: Canada is a unilingual Anglophone country. Of course, the museums that I visited are all bilingual. But as soon as you step out the door, you're in a land where French is seen as a foreign language, just like Flemish, Wolof or Swedish. [translation]"[5] In 2011, after visiting some 30 restaurants and stores in the Byward Market that leased commercial space from the National Capital Commission, *Le Droit* found that close to one third did not provide services or menus in French.[6] Meanwhile, Chris McAlear, an English-speaking Montrealer interviewed by CTV for a special report on the presence of English and French in Ottawa and Gatineau, said: "I'm a little bit surprised because I figured there was a lot more bilingualism in Ottawa."[7]

There are others, however, who feel that the situation described by the Royal Commission is no longer true. In 2008, Ottawa Tourism Chair Daniel Laliberté said that "the status of French in Ottawa is 'very good' and that the city is 'almost bilingual.' In hotels, the information found in the rooms and on restaurant menus is generally provided in both languages. [translation]"[8] More recently, *Ottawa Sun* columnist Brigitte Pellerin wrote: "I am a French-speaking Quebecer who moved to Ottawa in 2000. What sort of first impression did Ottawa leave on me? That of a very welcoming, clean, friendly, city where most people speak English, but where just about everyone is happy to help francophone visitors find their way, in whatever broken French they can manage."[9]

4 Report of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, p. 85.

5 Richard Martineau, "My Visit in Ottawa," *Journal de Montréal*, July 2, 2007. On-line version (http://fr.canoe.ca/infos/chroniques/richardmartineau/archives/2007/07/20070702-120300.html) accessed on March 31, 2012 [French only].

6 Philippe Orfali, "La CCN peine à imposer le français," *Le Droit*, July 11, 2011. On-line version (www.lapresse.ca/le-droit/actualites/ville-dottawa/201107/12/01-4417325-la-ccn-peine-a-imposer-le-francais.php) accessed on March 31, 2012 [French only].

7 Joanne Schnurr, "Joanne Schnurr investigates bilingualism in Ottawa," *Is Ottawa as bilingual as you think?*, CTV, TV broadcast, November 1, 2011. On-line version (http://ottawa.ctv.ca/servlet/an/local/CTVNews/20111101/OTT_bilingual_capital_111101/20111101/?hub=OttawaHome#TopVideoAn) accessed on March 31, 2012.

8 Lisa Maria Noël, "Dites : «FRANÇAIS»," *Magazine Jobboom*, vol. 9, no. 2, February 2008. On-line version (http://carriere.jobboom.com/marche-travail/regions/outaouais/2008/02/16/pf-4852315.html) accessed March 31, 2012 [French only].

9 Brigitte Pellerin, "Shopping for trouble," *Ottawa Sun*, August 2, 2011. On-line version (www.ottawasun.com/2011/08/02/shopping-for-trouble) accessed on March 31, 2012.

What is the current situation? Apart from the statements above, which are based mainly on impressions or on a limited number of observations, is today's Ottawa a capital where linguistic duality is truly a fundamental value?

In the summer of 2011 and the spring of 2012, the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages tried to answer this question by recreating a typical visitor's experience in Ottawa.[10] The objective was to determine whether it was possible to be served in French at various locations throughout the capital. The Office of the Commissioner visited nine federal institutions[11] to check their ability to assist visitors in French. It also observed the use of French at the Ottawa Macdonald-Cartier International Airport and at businesses in three popular tourist and commercial areas: the Byward Market, the Rideau Centre and the Sparks Street Mall. The results are presented in the following section.

A VISITOR'S EXPERIENCE IN OTTAWA

1 *ARRIVING AT THE AIRPORT*

Imagine you are a visitor coming to Ottawa. You may be arriving from Summerside, Val-d'Or, Saskatoon, Liège or even Tokyo. If you travelled to Canada's capital by airplane, your perception of the presence of English and French would begin to take shape as soon as you land at the airport. If you came through the Ottawa airport when the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages was making its observations, your official languages experience would have been mixed.

The Office of the Commissioner found that signs in the airport, particularly directional signs, were indeed in both official languages. Television monitors were broadcasting alternating English- and French-language content, which helped to create a bilingual visual and auditory environment. In restaurants and car rental agencies, most of the signs had English and French versions.

Few employees of these businesses, however, invited visitors to use English or French by greeting them with a bilingual phrase such as "Hello, bonjour" or "Next, suivant." Services provided by restaurants and car rental agencies were not always in both official languages. Questions in French such as "Can I return the rental car to one of your Toronto locations?" or "What's the soup of the day?" received appropriate answers less than 6 times out of 10. Often, an employee or server, or even another employee called upon to help, could not answer these types of questions in French.

2 *CHECKING IN AT THE HOTEL*

If you, as a typical visitor, had gone to your hotel after leaving the airport, you may have been surprised at the visual presence of English and French. During its observations, the Office of the Commissioner found that very few hotels used both official languages in their signage or printed material.

10 Observations were performed by Ipsos Reid and by employees of the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages.

11 The Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages visited the following nine federal institutions: Canada's National Arts Centre, the Canadian Air Transport Security Authority, the Ottawa International Airport Authority, the National Capital Commission, the Canadian Museum of Civilization Corporation (which manages the Canadian War Museum and the Canadian Museum of Civilization), the Canadian Museum of Nature, the National Gallery of Canada, the Parliament of Canada and Rideau Hall.

RESULTS OF OBSERVATIONS AT VARIOUS FEDERAL INSTITUTIONS AND BUSINESSES IN OTTAWA (AUGUST–SEPTEMBER 2011 AND JUNE 2012)*

		VISUAL ACTIVE OFFER (%)	IN-PERSON ACTIVE OFFER (%)	AVAILABILITY OF SERVICE IN FRENCH (%)
FEDERAL INSTITUTIONS	Canada's National Arts Centre	98	84	100
	Canadian Air Transport Security Authority	100	33	55
	Canadian Museum of Civilization Corporation (Canadian War Museum and Canadian Museum of Civilization)	98	60	100
	Canadian Museum of Nature	100	57	100
	National Capital Commission	100	79	100
	National Gallery of Canada	98	54	98
	Ottawa International Airport Authority	81	3	57
	Parliament of Canada	98	68	100
	Rideau Hall	97	66	100
BUSINESSES WITH LEASES	Restaurants	30	2	46
	Other business types	26	6	61
BUSINESSES WITHOUT LEASES	Banks	64	54	86
	Hotels	27	4	88
	Restaurants	13	2	67
	Other business types	19	6	73

* Observations were made in person at bilingual service points of federal institutions, at businesses that lease commercial space from a federal institution (Public Works and Government Services Canada or National Capital Commission), and at businesses that do not lease space from a federal institution.

However, you likely would have been impressed by the fact that hotel staff could serve guests in both English and French. Although very few hotel employees proactively greeted guests in both official languages, you could easily use either English or French to get your hotel key, determine whether smoking was allowed or find out whether non-guests could use the pool. Service in French was readily available nearly 9 times out of 10 in Ottawa hotels.

EXPLORING THE CITY

After dropping your luggage off in your hotel room, you might decide to explore one of the many sites in Ottawa that fall under the responsibility of federal institutions. Visiting these attractions, you would have felt confident in knowing that linguistic duality is valued by the federal institutions serving visitors to Canada's capital. For example, staff at Canada's National Arts Centre, the National Capital Commission, the Canadian Museum of Nature, the National Gallery of Canada, the museums under the Canadian Museum of Civilization Corporation, the Parliament of Canada and Rideau Hall were all exemplary in terms of the visual active offer and communications with the public.

The only drawback was that most of these institutions seemed to be having trouble convincing their employees of the importance of using a bilingual phrase like "Hello, bonjour" to greet visitors and let them know that they can use either English or French. Only two of the institutions visited by the Office of the Commissioner provided the in-person active offer more than 7 times out of 10: the National Capital Commission (79%) and Canada's National Arts Centre (84%).

HITTING THE SHOPS

Later on, you might want to head to one of Ottawa's tourist areas to find a bank, grab a drink, pick up a souvenir or check out the local food scene. You would notice that while French is present in public spaces, it is still not as prevalent as English.

During the Office of the Commissioner's observations, French was less prominent than English on signage and printed material in the Byward Market, at the Rideau Centre and on the Sparks Street Mall, even in businesses located in federal government buildings—whose leases include language obligations regarding signage.

The Office of the Commissioner found that customers at full-service restaurants, fast-food restaurants and coffee shops had little chance of finding a menu in French. In fact, 74% of the restaurants visited did not have French or bilingual menus. Most of the time, the menus in these restaurants were available in English only.

The language clauses in the federal government leases between restaurants and Public Works and Government Services Canada or the National Capital Commission are apparently starting to have the desired effect. Although there is limited availability of menus in both official languages, there is a better chance of getting English and French menus in restaurants that have a lease with the federal government. To continue in its efforts to improve, Public Works and Government Services Canada plans to implement a new strategy in the fall of 2012 to promote linguistic duality among its commercial tenants in the national capital area. When renewing leases, the National Capital Commission requires its tenants to meet the language needs of both English- and French-speaking clients.

LANGUAGE OF OTTAWA RESTAURANT MENUS (SUMMER 2011 AND SPRING 2012)

RESTAURANTS* (FULL-SERVICE, FAST-FOOD AND COFFEE SHOPS)	MENUS IN BOTH OFFICIAL LANGUAGES (%)	MENUS IN ENGLISH ONLY (%)
With lease**	34	66
Without lease***	19	81
All	26	74

* Restaurants visited by the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages in August and September 2011 and in June 2012.

** Restaurants that lease space from a federal institution.

*** Restaurants that do not have a lease with a federal institution.

During its observations, the Office of the Commissioner found that, in most businesses, employees rarely greeted clients with a short message in both official languages. However, the data revealed that clients were able to get service in French about 7 times out of 10 in restaurants and stores in the Byward Market, at the Rideau Centre and on the Sparks Street Mall. Banks scored even better: in-person active offer was made in 54% of cases and services were provided in French in 86% of cases. "Our institution adheres to a general principle," says Claude Breton, National Bank's Senior Manager of Public Affairs. "In Ottawa, as in all the provinces outside Quebec, we post signs and provide services in both languages where there is enough demand. All of our Ottawa branches are bilingual in areas with significant numbers of French-speaking residents, workers or tourists. [translation]"[12]

5

GOODBYE! AU REVOIR!

After your stay in Canada's capital, you might leave the city via the Ottawa Macdonald-Cartier International Airport. Representatives of the Canadian Air Transport Security Authority would be the ones to leave you with your final impression of Ottawa as the capital of a country where linguistic duality is a fundamental value.

During the Office of the Commissioner's observations, contractors providing services on behalf of the Canadian Air Transport Security Authority were not consistent in giving this impression. Despite the fact that this federal institution's signs and documents for the travelling public at the Ottawa airport were in English and French, the in-person active offer was made by its contractors only 3 times out of 10 in the area restricted to passengers (e.g., during the carry-on baggage check or the metal detector screening). Furthermore, travellers received service in French only about 5 times out of 10 at these various

12 From a telephone interview conducted on April 7, 2012.

points of service. Often, none of the institution's third-party screening officers could understand common questions in French such as "Can I keep my toiletry kit with me?" or "Do I have to take off my shoes?"

FEDERAL INSTITUTIONS AND LINGUISTIC DUALITY

According to the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages' observations of selected federal institutions, services in French were readily available in some parts of Canada's capital; however, there is room for improvement regarding the in-person active offer. Most federal institutions serving visitors to the capital did not systematically make an in-person active offer. This means that federal employees or third parties acting on behalf of federal institutions did not use verbal expressions like "Hello, bonjour!" or "Next, suivant!" to let visitors know that they can request service in the official language of their choice.

There are ways to help federal employees get into the habit of regularly making the in-person active offer, and federal institutions can play a major role in making this happen. Canada's National Arts Centre and the National Capital Commission improved their performance in providing the in-person active offer by responding promptly to the average results they received on the Office of the Commissioner's 2009 report cards. Canada's National Arts Centre held meetings with its front-line staff to raise awareness of the importance of the active offer, and the National Capital Commission adopted internal policies and procedures that seem to have had a positive impact. Both institutions make a point of recruiting employees who can serve clients in the official language of their choice.

Almost all the federal institutions succeeded in creating a visual environment in which English and French were relatively equal, as well as an environment where clients can receive quality and timely service in the official language of their choice. The only ones that seemed to have difficulty with the in-person active offer and availability of service in both official languages were third parties hired by the Canadian Air Transport Security Authority (i.e., screening officers) and the Ottawa International Airport Authority (i.e., retailers and concessionaires).

The Canadian Air Transport Security Authority is both able and willing to do better. In June 2010, the institution developed a manual to help standardize its overall signage requirements. The

IN-PERSON ACTIVE OFFER: IT WORKS!

A 2009 study[13] by the Canadian Institute for Research on Linguistic Minorities shows how crucial it is for federal institutions to provide the visual active offer and to encourage their staff to routinely make a verbal active offer of services. According to the study, 53% of French-speaking Nova Scotians said that it was highly likely that they would ask for government services in French if the person providing the service were wearing a pin indicating that he or she was bilingual, if there were signs indicating that services were available in both official languages or if there were English and French displays in the office. This rate climbed to 73% if the federal employee started the conversation with "Hello, bonjour", but dropped to 14% if there was no visual active offer.

13 Kenneth Deveau, Rodrigue Landry and Réal Allard, *Utilisation des services gouvernementaux de langue française*, Moncton, Canadian Institute for Research on Linguistic Minorities, 2009, pp. 68–71. On-line version (www.icrml.ca/images/stories/documents/fr/rapport_deveau_utilisation_services_gouv.pdf) accessed on March 31, 2012 [French only].

quality of its visual active offer has since improved. In November 2011, it also enhanced its requirements regarding the presence of bilingual screening officers at airport pre-board screening checkpoints subject to Part IV (Communications with and Services to the Public) of the *Official Languages Act*. In the fall of 2011, the Canadian Air Transport Security Authority reviewed its contracts with its third parties to improve the active offer and delivery of services in both official languages by its contractors' screening officers. Consequently, travellers passing through the Ottawa airport and other Canadian airports should receive better service in the official language of their choice.

FEDERAL INSTITUTIONS AND RAISING AWARENESS AMONG BUSINESSES

The Canadian Air Transport Security Authority is not the only federal institution that knows how to strengthen linguistic duality in Ottawa by providing quality service in both official languages and encouraging its private-sector partners to do the same. Public Works and Government Services Canada and the National Capital Commission are also committed to making efforts in this area.

Since 2006, Public Works and Government Services Canada has been adding language clauses to all new leases and renewals for commercial spaces in its buildings. The Department is closely monitoring compliance with the language clauses in its leases.

The National Capital Commission also requires its new tenants to be able to serve both English- and French-speakers. It conducts quarterly inspections to ensure that businesses on its properties post signs and serve their clients in both official languages.

Public Works and Government Services Canada and the National Capital Commission understand that creating a bilingual image of Canada's capital city can only be achieved by raising awareness among the Ottawa business community about the importance of linguistic duality and by helping Ottawa businesses incorporate it into their operations. Consequently, these two federal institutions joined Canadian Heritage to support the City of Ottawa in creating a business assistance project.

This project was started in the early 2000s and Canadian Heritage has played a key role over the past 10 years. A study commissioned by the City of Ottawa revealed that businesses in the Byward Market and St. Laurent Shopping Centre "were truly interested in improving their French-language services, but . . . lacked the necessary expertise and resources"[14] to make it happen. This study inspired the City of Ottawa and its federal partners to enlist the help of an association called the Regroupement des gens d'affaires de la Capitale nationale to coordinate the innovative project.

Since 2006, the 600-member Regroupement des gens d'affaires de la Capitale nationale has been raising awareness among Ottawa's business community about the importance of using both official languages. The association helps businesses access services from the Translation Bureau of Public Works and Government Services Canada to translate their signs and documents, and provides workshops to give front-line employees a quick primer on key phrases in French and to help them develop good linguistic reflexes. It also helps businesses recruit

14 Canadian Heritage, *Business Assistance Project*, 2011. On-line version (www.pch.gc.ca/pgm/lo-ol/sb-bs/proj_ent-eng.cfm) accessed on March 31, 2012.

bilingual staff by putting them in contact with university employment offices and creates demand by encouraging visitors to use English and French in stores. "All of these efforts have produced very positive results and raised awareness among businesses in the capital about the importance of serving clients in the official language of their choice; it's good for business! [translation]"[15] says Joanne Lefebvre, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Regroupement des gens d'affaires de la Capitale nationale.

To ensure that Ottawa businesses are taking optimal advantage of the best linguistic duality practices and that a bilingual phrase like "Hello, bonjour" becomes one of the capital's hallmarks, federal institutions and their partners, including the City of Ottawa, must continue to support and assist the capital's business community.

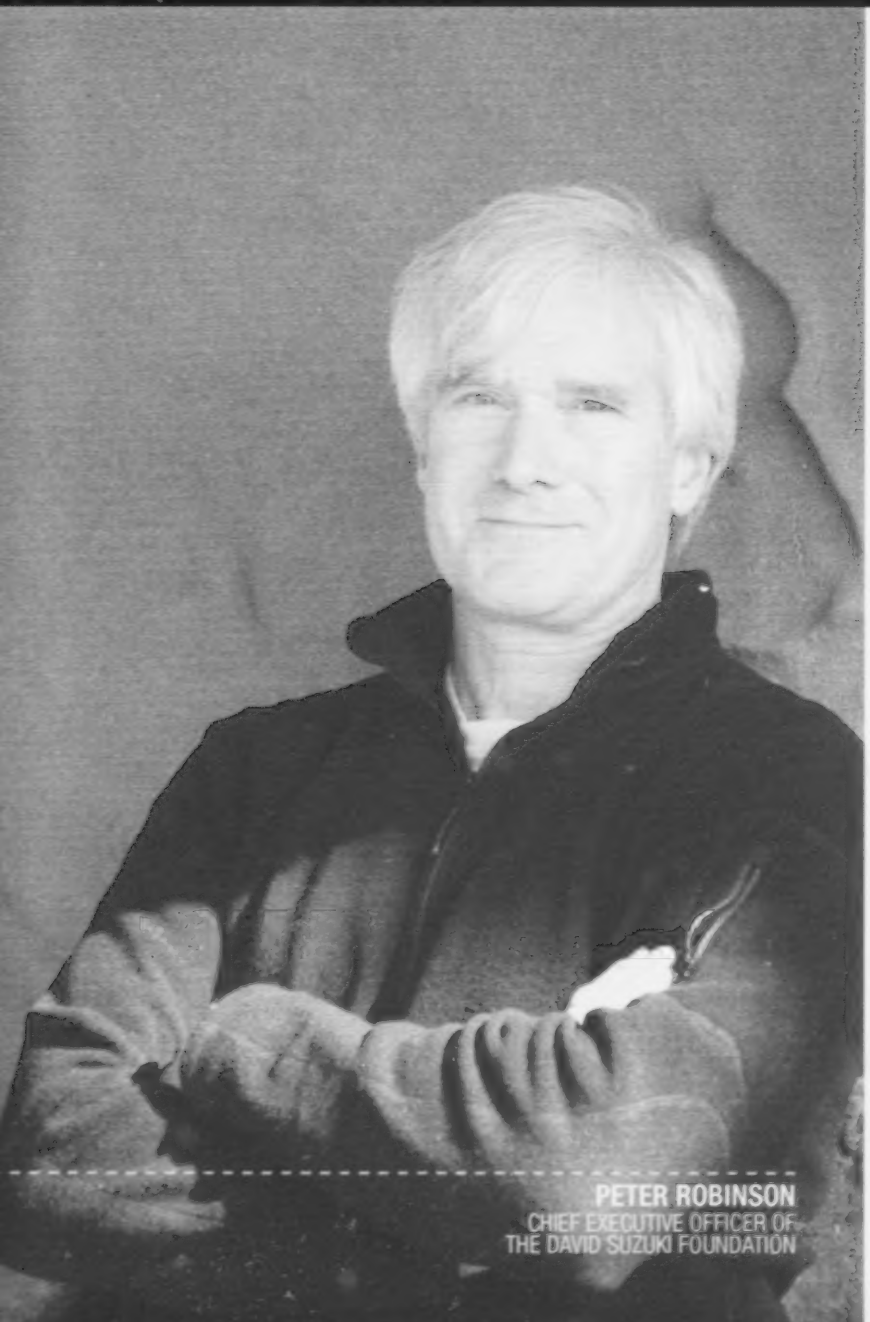
A WELL-KEPT SECRET

Geographer Mathieu Besmier noted that Ottawa has not always been able to take full advantage of the strong symbolic power of some of its natural wonders—such as the Ottawa River, Rideau Falls and Gatineau Park—which today are the cornerstone of the national capital's image. Emblematic of Canada's beauty and vastness, these attractions were, for a long time, "mostly ignored and were never set off in an impressive overall scheme."[16] Similarly, the fact that the national capital was home to Canada's two official language communities, as well as tens of thousands of bilingual Canadians, was an asset that was undervalued by the capital's pioneers for decades. This advantage should have been celebrated, promoted and strengthened from the very beginning.

In a few years, Ottawa will play a key role in celebrating the 150th anniversary of Canadian Confederation. It is critical for the Government of Canada and its partners to continue to pave the way linguistically so that the capital can truly rise to the occasion. Ottawa is more than capable of serving as a bridge between English- and French-Canadians, and of realizing its potential to become a truly Canadian symbol.

15 From a telephone interview conducted on January 6, 2012.

16 Mathieu Besmier, "Ottawa: Federal capital and first national symbol," *Queen's Quarterly*, vol. 110, no. 2, June 2003, p. 196.



PETER ROBINSON
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF
THE DAVID SUZUKI FOUNDATION

CHAPTER 3
OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: GOOD FOR BUSINESS

Although the federal government is primarily responsible for strengthening linguistic duality, it is not the only one with a key role in promoting English and French in Canada. Along with provincial, territorial and municipal governments, the private sector also has a role to play.

THE ADVANTAGE OF SERVING CLIENTS IN THEIR OWN LANGUAGE

For Canadians, being proficient in English and French is a great advantage. Businesses operating in Canada also benefit from working effectively in both official languages.

Businesses that want to succeed in the Canadian market are more competitive when they use both English and French, because clients generally prefer to do business in their first official language and also feel more comfortable when they use it. This is true not just for unilingual Canadians, but also for people who are fluent in both official languages. Language is much more than a simple communication tool, and for many, it is strongly connected to identity. In the words of Nelson Mandela, former President of South Africa and leader of the anti-apartheid movement, "If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his language, that goes to his heart."[1]

A study conducted in Quebec and Finland found that clients who were served in the language of their choice were prepared to pay more for a product.[2] International businesses located on the Acadian peninsula have conducted market studies and learned that they benefit from advertising in both of Canada's official languages. However, some Canadian businesses assume that, outside of Quebec, they can afford to operate in English only.

Researchers have found that, when businesses provide documents in the language the client knows best, the client processes the information more effectively and remembers it better.[3] Another study found that corporate messages are more likely to be received favourably if they are in the client's first language.[4]

Kellogg's was one of the first companies to see the advantages of marketing to Canadians in the official language of their choice. In 1907, just one year after it was founded and some 60 years before the *Official Languages Act* was passed, this U.S. corporation decided—completely of its own volition, despite popular belief—to print information in both English and French on its cereal boxes sold in Canada. According to a representative of Kellogg's Canada, "'Canada was the first foreign market, and it just must have seemed right' to print the essential product information as well as the accompanying educational and health messages in the two languages of the country."[5]

Since then, other businesses have shown that they understand that Canada is a bilingual country, and that this means that there are certain obligations.

GATINEAU BUSINESSES AND OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

In February 2012, the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages conducted a series of observations[6] to learn whether it was possible to be served in English on the Quebec side of the

1 European Commission, *10th European Day of Languages: What's happening near you*, News Release, Brussels, September 23, 2011. On-line version (http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/11/1065&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN) accessed March 31, 2012.

2 Jonas Holmqvist, "Consumer language preferences in service encounters: A cross-cultural perspective," *Managing Service Quality*, vol. 21, no. 2, 2011, p. 188.

3 Claudia Dolinsky and Richard A. Feinberg, "Linguistic barriers to consumer information processing: Information overload in the Hispanic population," *Psychology and Marketing*, vol. 3, no. 4, 1986, pp. 261–271.

4 Peter Roslow and J.A.F. Nicholls, "Targeting the Hispanic market: Comparative persuasion of TV commercials in Spanish and English," *Journal of Advertising Research*, vol. 36, no. 3, May-June 1996, pp. 67–77.

5 Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, "Labelling: Bilingual," *Language and Society*, vol. 38, March 1992, p. 6.

6 The Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages hired Ipsos Reid to perform these observations.

National Capital Region. Observations were made at businesses located near the Canadian Museum of Civilization, near Lac Leamy and at skiing facilities. It appears that these businesses understand the many benefits of linguistic duality in a region that straddles the border between Quebec and Ontario.

Based on the Office of the Commissioner's observations, hotels located near major tourist sites in Gatineau are doing an exemplary job of taking both of Canada's official languages into account. They all had bilingual signage and other visual elements to show visitors that they encourage the use of English and French. At the time of the observations, every one of the hotels served their guests quickly and effectively in English. Hotel employees were always able to answer questions in English like "Do you have a swimming pool in the hotel?" or "Do you allow pets?"

The Office of the Commissioner found that Gatineau restaurants visited were less likely than the hotels to visually encourage clients to use the official language of their choice: only 54% made a visual active offer of service in English and French. However, 95% were able to serve visitors in English. Furthermore, 88% of full-service restaurants, fast-food restaurants and coffee shops were able to provide English or bilingual menus—either immediately or upon request.

The in-person active offer of service in English and French—greeting clients with "Bonjour, hello" or something similar—seemed to be used infrequently in Gatineau; only about 10% of businesses at most were using it in February 2012.

In general, most hotels and restaurants in Gatineau set an example that other Canadian cities would do well to follow.

RESULTS OF OBSERVATIONS AT A FEDERAL INSTITUTION AND AT VARIOUS BUSINESSES IN GATINEAU (FEBRUARY 2012)

		VISUAL ACTIVE OFFER (%)	IN-PERSON ACTIVE OFFER (%)	AVAILABILITY OF SERVICE IN ENGLISH (%)
FEDERAL INSTITUTION	Canadian Museum of Civilization	100	64	100
BUSINESSES*	Banks	25	3	98
	Hotels	100	3	100
	Restaurants	54	10	95
	Other business types	59	0	100

* Observations were made at businesses located near the Canadian Museum of Civilization, near Lac Leamy and at skiing facilities.

MEANWHILE, AT THE MUSEUM...

In February 2012, the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages also made observations on how well the Canadian Museum of Civilization in Gatineau was fulfilling its obligations regarding services to the public under the *Official Languages Act*. Observation data showed that Museum personnel did not systematically use bilingual formulas like "Bonjour, hello" or "Suivant, next" when dealing with the public. However, the Museum was exemplary in making the visual active offer of service in English and French, and in providing services in each visitor's preferred official language.

BUILDING A BILINGUAL ORGANIZATION

An estimated 46% of the economic activity of southeastern New Brunswick depends on French-speaking residents, organizations and tourists. The other 54% relies on English-speaking residents, organizations and tourists.[7] The Delta Beauséjour hotel in downtown Moncton is well aware of this reality and of the importance of addressing it.

To show that bilingualism is an intrinsic part of the Delta Beauséjour's guest service principles, hotel management has ensured that all signage is in English and French and that all staff greet each guest with a "Hello, bonjour". According to General Manager Raymond Roberge, guests can expect to receive fast and effective service in the official language of their choice at any time of the day or night.

To position his Moncton hotel as bilingual, Mr. Roberge prioritizes candidates' language skills right from the moment they are hired. "We do sometimes hire good unilingual candidates, but when that happens, we offer them a free second-language course that focuses on the vocabulary they need to do their jobs. And we make sure that new hires develop good linguistic reflexes while they are being trained. But most of all," says Mr. Roberge, "the Delta Beauséjour operates in both languages because we believe in linguistic duality, because over the years we have been able to develop a corporate culture that values linguistic duality. You don't know how happy it makes my colleagues and me to see employees who used to be unilingual get up at an event like our General Meeting and speak publicly in their second language. [translation]"[8] This is a great example of a business that considers bilingualism to be a corporate value.

BILINGUALISM A SOUND BUSINESS CHOICE

Although the path to linguistic duality can be challenging for any company, when the Commissioner of Official Languages met with two representatives of Rogers Communications on January 24, 2012, he learned that the Toronto-based company had been making significant efforts for several years to operate in both English and French in many parts of Canada.

To meet the needs of clients and employees in Quebec, New Brunswick and parts of Ontario, regardless of their preferred official language, Rogers Communications created a committee specifically responsible for establishing rules and procedures regarding language and for putting them into effect. For example, "whether it's for a new product, when a new sales representative comes in, etc., [the rule is] all the documentation is in two languages," explains Garrick Tiplady, Senior Vice-President of Customer Experience at Rogers Communications. "That includes the knowledge database available to all representatives."

7 Marc Leblanc, *Retombées économiques de la présence des francophones dans le sud-est du Nouveau-Brunswick*, Final report, Petit-Rocher, Société de l'Acadie du Nouveau-Brunswick, 2009, p. 25. On-line version (www.sanb.ca/FileSystem/Id/158) accessed March 31, 2012 [French only].

8 Unless otherwise indicated, all quotations cited in this chapter were obtained be e-mail or during telephone interviews conducted between December 16, 2011, and March 31, 2012.

Rising to the challenge of linguistic duality, Rogers Communications has also taken care to establish some of its call centres in areas that have a bilingual workforce. Some businesses say it is difficult to find workers who can speak both English and French, but Rogers Communications has not had any problems, according to Mr. Tiplady. "Offering services in both languages is in the DNA of the company, simply part of doing business in a bilingual country."

SECOND NATURE

Mountain Equipment Co-op, an outdoor retail co-operative with over 3.5 million members, understands that linguistic duality is a fundamental Canadian value. One of the Co-op's objectives is to "earn the respect of its French-speaking members so they can feel at home in their co-op and make it their own. [translation]"[9] Mountain Equipment Co-op makes sure that it has at least one French-speaking employee present at all times in stores located outside of Quebec. It ensures that the staff of its Vancouver headquarters includes bilingual personnel who can effectively meet the needs of French-speaking clients and employees. The Co-op also provides high-quality information in both English and French on all of its packaging and has created an illustrated bilingual dictionary of outdoor recreation and gear terminology called *Le Petit MEC*.[10] The Office québécois de la langue française has even included a number of *Petit MEC* terms in its *Grand dictionnaire terminologique*.

"Working in both languages really is second nature to us," says David Labistour, Mountain Equipment Co-op's Chief Executive Officer. "We've been doing it long enough that we don't discuss it anymore. We don't even think about it, it's part of the business. When we bring in a new product, when we add something to our Web site, when we conduct marketing efforts, we use both languages, without thinking, just because that's how we do things. Each of Canada's language communities deserves to be treated with respect. If you set up that philosophy right from the beginning, the rest will follow."

ONE STEP AT A TIME

Making the shift towards linguistic duality may seem intimidating, but it shouldn't be, explains Peter Robinson, Chief Executive Officer of the David Suzuki Foundation and former Chief Executive Officer of Mountain Equipment Co-op. "You need to start by stating the importance of having all regions of Canada represented in the enterprise, the fact that you cannot be national if some parts of the country are missing. Once this is accepted and understood, you start talking about what's required to represent all regions. To do business in Quebec and Francophone communities, you certainly need to speak French, so the onus is on you to develop the capacity to serve people in the official language of their choice."

The rest is just logistics, according to Mr. Robinson. So as not to panic people or give the impression that everyone will have to become bilingual, an organization needs to start by determining how it will make use of both official languages. This might mean that managers in Quebec will

9 Mountain Equipment Co-op, *Francisation : l'approche MEC*, 2012. On-line version (www.mec.ca/AST/ContentPrimary/AboutMEC/AboutOurCoop/Francisation.jsp) accessed March 31, 2012 [French only].

10 Mountain Equipment Co-op, *Francisation : l'approche MEC*, 2012.

need to know French; that branches or stores located in predominantly English-speaking cities like Vancouver will need to have at least one bilingual employee on duty at all times; or that language specialists will need to be hired by the head office to produce documents in French.

"Top managers also have to show commitment and leadership by becoming more conversant in their second language, by using it as much as possible, and by sending the message that the organization will support people who want to become bilingual. Firms don't do enough to support bilingualism," concludes Mr. Robinson, who grew up in British Columbia and learned French as an adult in Rwanda and Chicoutimi. "The idea with linguistic duality is not to get all the pieces together overnight. It's to have the attitude to do just a little more every day."

COOPERATION: A WIN-WIN SCENARIO

Businesses can improve their bilingualism by cooperating with each other. In 2007, for example, 11 insurance companies in the Québec City / Chaudière-Appalaches region decided to develop their English capacity collectively. This was one of the main reasons for creating the not-for-profit Centre de développement en assurances et services financiers.

"The situation has changed a lot in the Quebec insurance and financial services industry in our region, especially in Québec City and Lévis," says Gilles Juneau, the Centre's Executive Director. "Twenty years ago, everything happened in French. But with some of our members buying businesses outside of Quebec and getting into new geographical markets, the sector now needs to serve a greater number of English-speaking clients and do business with partners who don't necessarily speak French. [translation]"

To respond to these new linguistic challenges, the companies each took individual measures, Mr. Juneau explains. However, they also looked to the Centre for help "because they have to work together to foster a newly emerging bilingual workforce in such a predominantly French-speaking region. [translation]"

To address the fact that 30% of the jobs created in this industry in Québec City and Lévis in the coming years will be bilingual, the Centre is working with Université Laval and local CEGEPs so that they can offer more specialized insurance or finance courses in English. The Centre is also helping to create internships for young French-speaking students to learn their future profession in an English-speaking environment. In addition, it recently began developing a series of on-line courses to train call centre employees who use a very technical vocabulary in English. "Only a group like this could come up with a solution like this, [translation]" says Mr. Juneau.

BUSINESSES SUPPORTED BY FEDERAL INSTITUTIONS

Some Canadian and international businesses distinguish themselves by the efforts they make on a daily basis to meet the needs and expectations of English- and French-speaking Canadians. Others seek to improve their ability to operate in both official languages. Many small and medium-sized companies as well as large corporations would certainly take action if they were more aware of the benefits of linguistic duality and the possibility of better meeting the needs of their English- and French-speaking clients without necessarily making radical changes to the way they do business.

This is why it is important for the Government of Canada to continue to support Canadian businesses and international businesses located in Canada that foster linguistic duality.

Federal institutions, especially Industry Canada and Canadian Heritage, should look at some of the projects they fund that encourage the use of English and French in business, such as the Regroupement des gens d'affaires de la Capitale nationale's Business Assistance program, and work to ensure that these types of projects are undertaken in other parts of Canada.

The federal government does not hesitate to support Canadian businesses when they need to acquire new skills that give them a competitive edge in the market. It therefore should not hesitate to support them in their efforts to leverage and promote linguistic duality in Canada and throughout the world. This will create a win-win situation for the Canadian economy and for consumers.

RECOMMENDATION 3

The Commissioner of Official Languages recommends that the Minister of Industry create a support mechanism to encourage Canadian businesses to develop their capacity to operate and provide services in both official languages.

CHAPTER 4
FEDERAL INSTITUTIONS AND LINGUISTIC DUALITY

This chapter begins with an analysis of the complaints received by the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages in 2011–2012. It then describes the investigations and audits conducted by the Office of the Commissioner this year as well as two court remedies involving the Commissioner of Official Languages. The chapter concludes with the results of a series of meetings between the Office of the Commissioner and 13 federal institutions that have offices in the National Capital Region.[1] The meetings were held to gain a better understanding of the ways in which these institutions are strengthening linguistic duality in the National Capital Region.

1 The Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages visited the following 13 federal institutions: Canada's National Arts Centre, the Canadian Air Transport Security Authority, Canadian Heritage, the Canadian Museum of Civilization Corporation (which manages the Canadian War Museum and the Canadian Museum of Civilization), the Canadian Museum of Nature, the House of Commons, the Library of Parliament, the National Capital Commission, the National Gallery of Canada, the Ottawa International Airport Authority, Public Works and Government Services Canada, Rideau Hall and the Senate.

COMPLAINTS

Part of the Commissioner of Official Languages' mandate is to ensure that federal institutions respect the language rights of their employees and of the general public. The Commissioner fulfills this responsibility both proactively—for example, by intervening with institutions to help them comply with the *Official Languages Act*—and reactively, by investigating complaints brought to his attention.

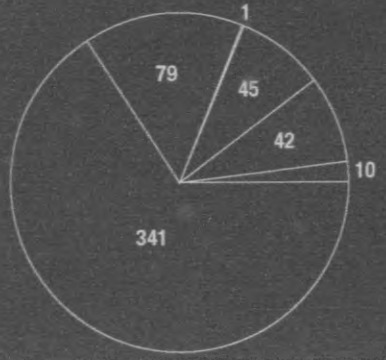
In 2011–2012, the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages received a total of 643 complaints, 518 of which were deemed to be admissible (81%). As Figure 2 shows, 341 involved communications with and services to the public (Part IV of the Act); 79 pertained to language of work (Part V); 45 were related to the advancement of English and French (Part VII); and 42 concerned the language requirements of positions (Part XI, section 91).

In 2011–2012, almost half (48%) of all incidents resulting in a complaint occurred in the National Capital Region, with the Ontario part generating four times as many incidents as the Quebec part. Outside of the National Capital Region, most of the violations of the Act were observed in Ontario (15%), Quebec (11%) and New Brunswick (7%).

In 2011–2012, most of the complaints were related to Part IV of the Act and focused on the following three areas: services in person (79 complaints), services in writing (63) and services in airports (60).

In 2011–2012, the Office of the Commissioner received 45 complaints about the way in which the federal government and its institutions complied with their obligations related to the

FIGURE 2
ADMISSIBLE COMPLAINTS IN 2011–2012 BY PART OF THE *OFFICIAL LANGUAGES ACT*



341: Communications with and services to the public (Part IV)
79: Language of work (Part V)
1: Equitable participation (Part VI)
45: Advancement of English and French (Part VII)
42: Language requirements of positions (Part XI, section 91)
10: Other parts of the Act

advancement of English and French (Part VII), compared with 109 Part VII-related complaints received the year before. It should be mentioned, however, that the decision to eliminate the long-form census questionnaire alone resulted in 84 complaints. Removing these complaints from the equation, Part VII-related complaints nearly doubled in 2011–2012 (45) compared with 2010–2011 (25).

INVESTIGATIONS

The following sections provide examples of some of the investigations of complaints processed by the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages during the 2011–2012 fiscal year. They reflect some of the recurring problems that federal institutions need to address.

CONTROVERSIAL APPOINTMENT

The Governor in Council makes appointments on a case-by-case basis to fill positions ranging from chief executive officers of Crown corporations and members of quasi-judicial tribunals to deputy ministers and agents of Parliament. Recruiting candidates for these positions can be challenging, particularly because the individuals who are appointed must have high-level skills. Nevertheless, the Governor in Council must exercise discretion according to the spirit and intent of the *Official Languages Act*.

In carrying out its responsabilities related to the Governor in Council appointment process, the Privy Council Office must ensure that the language requirements arising from the Act are taken into consideration when determining the language profile of each position to be filled. Federal institutions must also do their part by using their influence to make sure that appointments made by the Governor in Council comply with the Act.

The results of this process should reflect the nature of each position and the scope of the incumbent's responsibilities. When proficiency in both official languages is deemed essential to the performance of the duties of a position, the Privy Council Office should confirm that the nominee is proficient in both languages at the time the appointment is recommended to the Governor in Council.

By meeting its official languages responsibilities, the Privy Council Office ensures that each appointment made by the Governor in Council reinforces the federal government's commitment to promote the equality of English and French in Canadian society.

Taking language considerations into account in Governor in Council appointments is a recurring issue. This year, the Office of the Commissioner received a significant number of complaints (43) regarding the appointment of the Auditor General. The Office of the Commissioner completed its investigation in the summer of 2012 and submitted its final report to the Privy Council Office.

POSTAL TERMINOLOGY IN ATLANTIC CANADA

In 2011–2012, the Office of the Commissioner once again received numerous complaints about Canada Post's ability to serve Canadians in the official language of their choice. Most of these complaints were about the services provided at post offices and postal outlets managed by third parties acting on behalf of the institution.

Canada Post usually responds promptly when informed of a potential problem. For example, in January 2011, the Office of the Commissioner received a complaint that a postal outlet in Moncton, New Brunswick, did not provide telephone services of equal quality in English and

French. According to the complaint, a Canada Post employee replied to questions using postal terminology in English rather than French.

This complaint prompted the Office of the Commissioner to intervene with Canada Post, which took the incident seriously. The institution conducted a review and determined that its staff was either unfamiliar with or did not always use French postal expressions. To resolve the problem, Canada Post created a bilingual glossary of current postal terminology and distributed it to all employees at bilingual postal outlets in Atlantic Canada.

REAL ESTATE NEEDS OF COMMUNITIES

In 2009, the Fédération franco-ténoise complained to the Office of the Commissioner that Public Works and Government Services Canada and the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat had failed to consider the Fédération as a priority purchaser when selling a surplus federal building in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories. The Office of the Commissioner determined that the complaint was founded and recommended that Public Works and Government Services Canada establish clear directives to ensure that the needs of official language communities[2] are taken into account in the sale or transfer of surplus federal real estate.[3]

Public Works and Government Services Canada is preparing a directive that will take the needs of official language communities into consideration to enhance their vitality and support their development.

Following the report on the investigation conducted by the Office of the Commissioner into this complaint, in 2011–2012, senior management at Public Works and Government Services Canada responded with significant efforts to find office space that meets the needs of the Fédération franco-ténoise.

LINGUISTIC DESIGNATION OF POSITIONS

In the federal public service, some positions are designated bilingual and others are designated unilingual. Section 91 of the *Official Languages Act* states that federal institutions must determine this designation objectively by identifying the specific functions that the incumbent is required to perform.

The Commissioner of Official Languages has repeatedly stated that underestimating the language requirements of a position can cause problems. Nevertheless, year after year, many institutions continue to evaluate the language requirements of positions less thoroughly than required.

Health Canada is one of these institutions. As a result, the Office of the Commissioner has received complaints in the past and, this year, received three more because Health Canada's First Nations and Inuit Health Branch did not establish the linguistic profiles of its positions objectively.

Health Canada claimed that the Branch serves a restricted and identifiable clientele, the members of which are unilingual English, which justified the "English essential" profile of positions in the Branch. The Office of the Commissioner's investigations found that this linguistic designation did not account for all of the duties that incumbents of these positions must perform with regard to the public. As a result, Health Canada raised the linguistic profile of four positions. An investigation is still ongoing for another position.

2 Throughout this chapter, official language minority communities are designated by the term "official language communities."

3 Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, *Annual report 2010–2011: Leadership, action, results*, Ottawa, 2011, p. 48. On-line version (www.officiallanguages.gc.ca/html/ar_ra_2010_11_p9_e.php#section4.2.5) accessed on March 31, 2012.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES AND THE RIGHT TO VOTE

For many years, the Office of the Commissioner has repeatedly intervened with Elections Canada to help this institution resolve problems that members of official language communities sometimes face on voting day. However, these problems persist.

The most recent federal election was held on May 2, 2011, and once again, some Canadians could not receive service in the official language of their choice, which resulted in 26 complaints being filed.

The Commissioner of Official Languages understands that recruiting bilingual staff can be a real challenge in many polling stations. Nevertheless, all voters should be able to exercise their right to vote in English or in French. Elections Canada should therefore consider the knowledge of both official languages to be an essential employment criterion for at least some of the election workers assigned to a polling station.

The bilingualism of election officials recruited from lists submitted to Elections Canada by political parties has a direct impact on the quality of bilingual services provided in various polling stations across the country. While parties are free to create these lists in any way they choose, including individuals who can speak both official languages can make a big difference in enabling English- and French-Canadians to exercise their right to vote in the official language of their choice.

The next federal election will be held in a few years, and the Commissioner expects significant progress to have been made by this time.

CANADIAN ARMY WEB SITES

The Office of the Commissioner has recently investigated various complaints regarding the balance of English and French on the Web sites of the Canadian Army, a component of the Canadian Forces under National Defence. These complaints, as well as the publication of the *Directive on the Use of Official Languages on Web Sites of National Defence*, prompted the Canadian Army to review the content of its Web sites.

Through this review, the Canadian Army found many shortcomings, and its webmasters undertook the huge task of correcting them. Thanks to these efforts, ensuring the equality of English and French has become a higher priority for Canadian Army Web sites. The Office of the Commissioner was thus able to close the investigation into two of the complaints it received.

The Office of the Commissioner encourages the other components of the Canadian Forces (the Royal Canadian Navy and the Royal Canadian Air Force), which are experiencing similar problems, to adopt this best practice.

PASSPORT CANADA GOES BEYOND ITS OBLIGATIONS

The Office of the Commissioner contacted Passport Canada following a complaint filed in the spring of 2011 regarding the lack of service in French at the passport office in St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador. Under the *Official Languages (Communications with and Services to the Public) Regulations*, the St. John's office is not required to serve the public in both official languages. However, in September 2011, Passport Canada delivered on its commitment to continue to improve services for official language communities. Capitalizing on the fact that its St. John's office had employees who could speak both English and French, Passport Canada officially designated

the office as bilingual. This exemplary initiative will help to better serve the more than 2,000 Franco-Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.

The Commissioner encourages Passport Canada to build on this momentum and continue to go beyond the obligations set out in the Regulations. The institution would do well to encourage its other offices, including its Toronto offices, to adopt similar solutions to improve the delivery of services in French.

AUDITS

AIR CANADA

In 2010, the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages conducted an audit to evaluate the services provided by Air Canada in English and French at its call centres, on board flights on designated bilingual routes and in airports where Air Canada has language obligations. The audit found that, to be able to ensure the equality of English and French, Canada's largest air carrier needs to change its organizational culture and thoroughly review its planning for the provision of bilingual services.

Air Canada's managers and staff often did not understand their organization's obligations with respect to the active offer and delivery of bilingual services. Although there were language training and maintenance of skill courses for employees at Air Canada and Jazz (a contract carrier for Air Canada), they were insufficient to meet the needs of employees and, as a result, those of the travelling public. For example, the bilingual capacity of Air Canada agents was insufficient in many airports. Moreover, Air Canada has not established monitoring mechanisms to measure Jazz's performance in the delivery of bilingual services.

In the spring of 2011, the Office of the Commissioner submitted its audit report, which contained 12 recommendations, to Air Canada. In response, Air Canada developed an action plan, for which the proposed measures and timeframes were generally satisfactory to the Commissioner. In September 2011, at about the same time as the public release of the audit report, Air Canada published its *Air Canada Linguistic Action Plan: Communications with and Services to the Public: 2011-2014*. It also drafted a new policy document called *Official Languages at Air Canada – Policy and Guidelines*.

However, Air Canada still needs to review its follow-up to recommendation 11, which focuses on the importance of consulting official language communities.

Because the Office of the Commissioner continues to receive complaints about Air Canada, it is important for the carrier to address all of the recommendations in the audit report as quickly as possible.

PARKS CANADA

In 2011–2012, the Office of the Commissioner conducted an audit to determine how well Parks Canada was providing services of equal quality in English and French to visitors.

The audit found that Parks Canada has a number of shortcomings that need to be addressed. For example, it needs to improve the management of its official languages program by developing an accountability framework and a new action plan that includes timeframes, performance indicators and an accountability mechanism. It also needs to review the way it organizes and delivers bilingual service in relation to its activities and interpretive programs.

The audit also revealed Parks Canada's many strengths with regard to official languages. For example, senior management showed leadership by developing a document called *Parks Canada Service – Quality Service Standards for You*, which raises the importance of greeting visitors in both official languages. Parks Canada has been quite successful in providing mandatory training in the active offer of bilingual services to ensure that all personnel understand their obligations. It has also gone to tremendous effort to provide visitors with a wide range of high-quality communications materials in both English and French.

In the audit report, the Commissioner made nine recommendations to encourage Parks Canada to continue to improve its capacity to provide its visitors with services of equal quality in English and French. He is satisfied with the action plan and timeframes proposed by Parks Canada to address eight of the recommendations.

INDUSTRY CANADA

From March to June 2011, the Office of the Commissioner conducted an audit of Industry Canada to determine how well the Department is meeting the requirements of Part VII of the *Official Languages Act*. The audit focused on Industry Canada's regional development agencies (specifically, the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario), its regional offices in eastern Canada and its headquarters in Ottawa, Ontario.

The objectives of the audit included determining whether Industry Canada had taken concrete measures having a real and positive effect on the vitality and development of official language communities, and whether official language communities were actively involved on an ongoing basis in the development of Industry Canada programs.

The audit found that the Department is fully committed to implementing Part VII of the Act and should be recognized for its progress to date. The audit also revealed that Industry Canada is fulfilling its Part VII responsibilities by maintaining a research program on socioeconomic data, key issues and priorities affecting the development of official language communities.

Certain shortcomings were noted, however, in the proactive and systematic measures taken by the Department in applying Part VII and in the mechanisms through which official language communities participate in the development and direction of programs that affect them directly.

The Commissioner made six recommendations to help Industry Canada to improve its performance under Part VII of the Act. He is generally satisfied with the measures the Department plans to take to implement these recommendations. However, the Commissioner believes that some of the measures could be more specific and more detailed to respond to recommendations 4 and 5.

COURT REMEDIES

THIBODEAU V. AIR CANADA

In 2010, Michel and Lynda Thibodeau initiated legal proceedings before the Federal Court to compel Air Canada to find a long-term solution to the problems that were affecting its ability—and that of its contract carrier, Jazz—to respect the rights of French-speaking travellers. The Commissioner of Official Languages was involved in the proceedings as an intervener.

Although Air Canada admitted to having been unable to serve the Thibodeaus in French several times, it denied any systemic problems. It also argued that the Montreal Convention, an international agreement incorporated into Canadian law through the *Carriage by Air Act*, excluded any possibility of awarding damages for any breaches of the *Official Languages Act* on international flights.

The Federal Court handed down its ruling on July 13, 2011. It first confirmed the quasi-constitutional status of the *Official Languages Act*. The Act therefore prevails over the Montreal Convention in the case of a conflict. The Court also found that Air Canada and Jazz had not developed the reflexes to proactively ensure that the language rights of the travelling public are respected.

Consequently, the Federal Court ordered Air Canada to send a letter of apology and pay damages of $12,000 to the Thibodeaus. The Court also ordered the carrier to make every reasonable effort to comply with Part IV of the *Official Languages Act* (as it pertains to services to the public) and to implement a monitoring system and procedures to quickly identify, document and quantify potential violations of its language duties.

Air Canada appealed this decision in September 2011. The Federal Court of Appeal heard the matter in April 2012 and should hand down its judgment by the end of 2012.

COMMISSIONER OF OFFICIAL LANGUAGES V. CBC/RADIO-CANADA

In August 2010, the Commissioner of Official Languages filed proceedings before the Federal Court to seek a court remedy against CBC/Radio-Canada. The application was made as a result of receiving 876 complaints about the broadcaster's decision to make significant budget cuts to its radio station in Windsor, Ontario. Following an investigation, the Commissioner had concluded that the institution had failed to fulfill its obligations under Part VII of the *Official Languages Act* because it had not considered the impact of its decision on the development and vitality of the French-speaking communities of southwestern Ontario.

The proceedings seek to determine whether CBC/Radio-Canada contravened the requirements of the Act. It will also determine whether the Commissioner can investigate complaints against CBC/Radio-Canada or whether, as the broadcaster claims, the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission is the only organization with jurisdiction to investigate its activities.

The Federal Court held a hearing on the question of the Commissioner's jurisdiction in April 2012. If the Court rules in the Commissioner's favour, it will hear the case by the end of the year regarding CBC/Radio-Canada's obligations under Part VII of the Act.

MEETINGS WITH FEDERAL INSTITUTIONS

Federal institutions must take strong action in order to make Canada a place where English and French are on an equal footing, where English- and French-Canadians engage in an open dialogue and where living in an officially bilingual country is a shared source of pride. Many of the 13 institutions the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages met with this year during its study of the visitor's experience in the national capital understand this and have taken action.

While the initiatives described in the following sections do not constitute positive measures for fostering the use of both official languages within the meaning of Part VII of the *Official Languages Act*, overall, they help strengthen linguistic duality in Canadian society.

LINGUISTIC DUALITY IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE

To be credible and effective in strengthening English and French in Canadian society, federal institutions must first foster linguistic duality within their own organizations.

Some of the 13 institutions the Office of the Commissioner met with this year have accomplished this by establishing a linguistic framework for their activities. For example, the Canadian Air Transport Security Authority has adopted a policy that clearly defines its administrative office employees' language rights and obligations under the Act. Unfortunately, third parties who serve the public on behalf of the Canadian Air Transport Security Authority do not appear to make this type of promotional effort in any kind of systematic way.

It is not enough for a policy merely to exist—it also needs to be communicated to everyone involved. For example, in 2011–2012, the Ottawa International Airport Authority published articles in its *Contact* newsletter to remind employees that they are required to serve travellers in the official language of the traveller's choice. This institution is also aware of the difficulties its third-party commercial tenants are having with their official languages obligations. To help raise awareness among these tenants, the Airport Authority emphasizes the importance of promoting linguistic duality in the language clause of their contracts. It also continues to regularly monitor the quality of bilingual services to the public in the airport.

Meanwhile, Public Works and Government Services Canada continues to strengthen linguistic duality by organizing activities and by using tools like its *Dialogue* newsletter, which provides tips and resources to help employees work more effectively in both official languages and improve their knowledge of English or French. Although Public Works and Government Services Canada has given its employees access to many official languages tools, the institution would benefit from finding innovative ways to support management's commitment to official languages.

Federal institutions, like their employees, sometimes need information on official languages. Canadian Heritage is one of the key sources of support. Tools like the *Guide for Federal Institutions:* Official Languages Act – *Part VII (Promotion of English and French)* or the *Bulletin 41-42* newsletter help federal institutions find ways to foster the equal status of English and French and enhance the vitality of official language communities. Canadian Heritage also provides support in other ways, such as by helping to organize consultations with official language communities. However, the Department needs to do more to support separate employers in their efforts to promote linguistic duality.

Many of the institutions the Office of the Commissioner met with this year strengthen linguistic duality by ensuring that their employees acquire and maintain second official language skills. For example, the House of Commons created its own language training and assessment centre, which helps both House of Commons employees and elected officials to improve their second official language skills. The Canadian Museum of Civilization Corporation checks the language skills of employees in bilingual positions every five years.

Some federal institutions know that strengthening linguistic duality is based on a sound understanding of their current situation. For example, during the past five years, the National Capital Commission, the Canadian Museum of Nature and the National Gallery of

Canada have conducted internal surveys to evaluate employee satisfaction regarding measures taken to promote the use of both official languages in the workplace. Because the Museum and the Gallery do not participate in the Public Service Employee Survey—which is conducted every three years to evaluate issues such as employee satisfaction with regard to being able to use the language of their choice in the workplace—this constitutes an exemplary measure.

As the Commissioner of Official Languages explained in his 2010–2011 annual report, federal institutions should not rely solely on the results of the Public Service Employee Survey to take action with regard to linguistic duality. To strengthen linguistic duality in the public service, it is also essential to recognize the efforts of employees and managers who work every day to create an environment where English and French are equal. The Canadian Museum of Civilization Corporation and the National Capital Commission are among the institutions that understand this. The former supports its managers' linguistic duality efforts by making it one of the criteria used to evaluate the quality of their work. The latter created a Prize for Excellence in Official Languages for employees whose work and conduct promote the advancement of linguistic duality.

LINGUISTIC DUALITY IN CANADIAN SOCIETY

Federal institutions must also strengthen English and French in society so that all Canadians can experience linguistic duality. Some of the 13 institutions the Office of the Commissioner met with this year have taken interesting measures in this regard.

Before taking any action, institutions should evaluate the impact on Canadians' perception of or experience with linguistic duality. The Senate seems to have developed this reflex: it analyzed the impact of different types of social media on linguistic duality before establishing a social media strategy that complies with the *Official Languages Act*.

Some institutions distinguish themselves by the quality of the measures they take to strengthen linguistic duality. For example, Public Works and Government Services Canada knows how to take full advantage of Service Canada's extensive network of offices across the country. In September 2011, it promoted the Language Portal of Canada as the Feature of the Month in all Service Canada offices, an initiative that reached nearly a million people.

The National Gallery of Canada, Canada's National Arts Centre and Rideau Hall ensure that English and French are treated equally at all times. The National Gallery of Canada strives to achieve an equal balance between English and French in its exhibitions in Canada and abroad, even though, in some cases, it has no obligation under the *Official Languages Act* to do so. Canada's National Arts Centre offers English and French programming of equal quality and sends information on its arts education programs to all elementary and high schools in the National Capital Region. Rideau Hall's organizational culture tries to ensure that every event systematically respects both official languages.

The Library of Parliament's Visitor Welcome Centre, where most visitors stop to book a tour of the Parliament buildings, systematically provides visual and verbal active offers of service in both official languages. The Library of Parliament also runs recruitment campaigns and advertises Ottawa job opportunities in English- and French-speaking communities. It offers job opportunities for young bilingual Canadians as well, such as the Parliamentary Guide Program.

Strengthening linguistic duality requires significant efforts that do not always produce immediate results. It is therefore important for institutions to understand what they are doing well and what needs improvement. Some institutions are doing a good job of following up on the measures they have taken. For example, the Senate invites everyone who has appeared before a committee to fill out an electronic survey indicating whether they are satisfied with how well their language preferences were respected. The Canadian Museum of Civilization Corporation monitors its performance by using questionnaires to measure client satisfaction.

If these two institutions have found ways to evaluate their bilingual service delivery efforts, others can do the same.

SUCCESS IS NO ACCIDENT

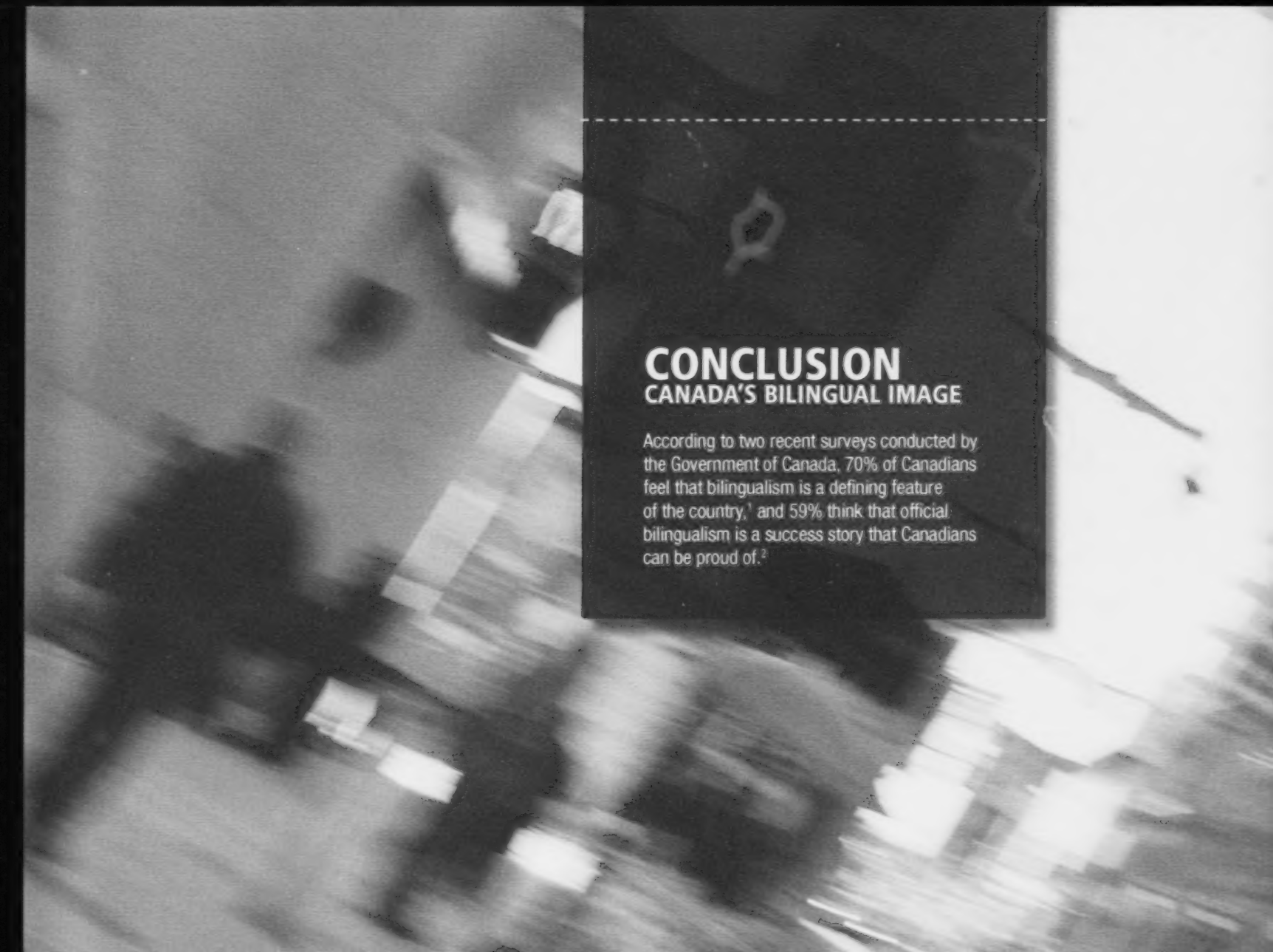
Following the meetings with 13 federal institutions in 2011–2012, the Office of the Commissioner found that these institutions are strengthening linguistic duality in various ways within the federal government.

Some of the institutions are succeeding particularly well in this area. They have created a strong culture of respect for linguistic duality and have standardized their practices to strengthen the equal status of English and French. They have made an ongoing commitment to official bilingualism.

To show how important linguistic duality is to Canadians, every federal institution should redouble its efforts to find new ways to raise the profile of English and French in Canada and to celebrate our two official languages.

ADMISSIBLE COMPLAINTS IN 2011–2012, BY PROVINCE/TERRITORY AND BY PART/SECTION OF THE *OFFICIAL LANGUAGES ACT*

	SERVICE TO THE PUBLIC	LANGUAGE OF WORK	EQUITABLE PARTICIPATION	ADVANCEMENT OF ENGLISH AND FRENCH	LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS	OTHERS	TOTAL
Newfoundland and Labrador	11	0	0	0	0	0	11
Prince Edward Island	2	0	0	0	1	0	3
Nova Scotia	16	0	1	15	1	0	33
New Brunswick	27	6	0	0	3	0	36
Quebec	27	15	0	10	2	1	55
National Capital Region (Quebec)	17	18	0	7	7	0	49
National Capital Region (Ontario)	125	32	0	11	24	8	200
Ontario	66	7	0	2	2	0	77
Manitoba	23	0	0	0	2	0	25
Saskatchewan	1	0	0	0	0	1	2
Alberta	12	0	0	0	0	0	12
British Columbia	6	1	0	0	0	0	7
Yukon	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Northwest Territories	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Nunavut	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Outside Canada	7	0	0	0	0	0	7
TOTAL	**341**	**79**	**1**	**45**	**42**	**10**	**518**



CONCLUSION
CANADA'S BILINGUAL IMAGE

According to two recent surveys conducted by the Government of Canada, 70% of Canadians feel that bilingualism is a defining feature of the country,[1] and 59% think that official bilingualism is a success story that Canadians can be proud of.[2]

Canadians—more than 20 million of them—are not the only ones who think that Canada is partly defined by its two major language communities. Research by University of Guelph history professor Matthew Hayday confirms that foreigners "often have this idea that Canada is this great bilingual country with the fantastic ability to be a bridge between two major world linguistic communities. They often think that linguistic duality is what is really fundamental about Canada and what it does or could be doing on the world scene."[3]

Since the passage of the *Official Languages Act* more than 40 years ago, a better balance has been achieved between English and French in terms of visibility. The generally negative findings of the 1963 Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism are now dated. However, Canada still has some work to do if it wants to live up to its reputation and benefit fully from the advantages of linguistic duality.

What can be done to make sure that in 2017, on the 150th anniversary of Confederation, Canada fully understands that the relationship between the English- and French-speaking majorities is "the most permanent theme"[4] in its history? That Canadians, whether bilingual, unilingual or multilingual, are proud of the fact that English and French can be heard in their neighbourhood, their town or their region?

First, more Canadians should have an opportunity to learn both of their country's official languages. While the purpose of the *Official Languages Act* has never been to make all Canadians bilingual, being able to speak both languages is a very valuable skill. According to Henry Annan, one of the young people the Commissioner of Official Languages met at a discussion forum in Halifax in November 2011, knowing more than one language is more of a necessity than a luxury in today's globalized world. "I've always thought that learning French is particularly important because it's spoken on every continent and it opens doors to amazing cultures. [translation]"

As Professor Hayday says, "the youth option is the best way to make sure there's a large cohort of Canadians that can bridge the country's two linguistic majorities. This means that the federal government really has an important role to play in helping to provide all sorts of strong opportunities for young Anglophones or Francophones to learn French or English."

The Prime Minister of Canada should make these opportunities available to all Canadians by allowing more young people to take part in language exchanges, and the Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages should work with his partners so that more post-secondary students can take some of their courses in their second official language.

1 Canadian Heritage, "Official languages: Facts and figures," *Report on Government of Canada consultations on linguistic duality and official languages*, February 2008, p. 5. On-line version (www.pch.gc.ca/pc-ch/consltn/lo-ol_2008/lord/index-eng.cfm #jmp-lan2) accessed March 31, 2012.

2 Jack Jedwab, *Official languages in Canada: Perceived or misperceived?*, Montréal, Association for Canadian Studies, 2009, p. 9. On-line version (www.acs-aec.ca/pdf/polls/12524225966052.doc) accessed March 31, 2012.

3 Unless otherwise indicated, all quotations cited in this chapter were obtained by e-mail or during telephone interviews conducted between December 16, 2011, and March 31, 2012.

4 Ramsay Cook, *Canada and the French-Canadian question*, Toronto, Macmillan, 1966, p. 169.

Ottawa will take centre stage during the celebrations for Canada's 150th anniversary in 2017. Between now and then, all federal institutions and corporate partners in the capital need to develop a bilingualism reflex. Besides being in the city's economic interest, creating a visually bilingual environment and automatically greeting Canadians and visitors in English and French and serving them in the official language of their choice will also showcase Ottawa's already bilingual personality. In the next five years, it will be less a matter of radically transforming the national capital than of revealing a well-kept secret: that Canada's capital city can meet visitors' needs in the official language of their choice more often than people think.

By using both English and French with their clients and by operating internally in both languages when necessary, thousands of Canadian and foreign companies that do business in Canada will serve both their own and the country's interests. Some companies are well aware of this, and some are less aware. The companies that have succeeded in this regard should be an example and an inspiration for others in both the near and more distant future.

Federal institutions have a crucial role in strengthening linguistic duality throughout the country. They all need to be exemplary leaders in promoting English and French. They would do well to follow the example of some of the 13 federal institutions that the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages met with this year.

In an increasingly complex world, Canada cannot achieve its full potential unless it meets the needs of its two largest language communities, encourages ongoing dialogue between its English- and French-speaking citizens and takes full advantage of the fact that two of the most influential languages on the planet are spoken and taught across the country.

Linguistic duality is one of Canada's core values, a part of its DNA. It is up to all Canadians to talk about it, take full advantage of it and celebrate it.

RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION 1

The Commissioner of Official Languages recommends that, in the run-up to Canada's 150th birthday, the Prime Minister take the necessary measures to double the number of young Canadians who participate each year in short- and long-term language exchanges at the high-school and post-secondary levels.

RECOMMENDATION 2

The Commissioner of Official Languages recommends that the Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages work together with provincial and territorial governments as well as post-secondary institutions to increase the number of programs in which students can take courses in their second official language.

RECOMMENDATION 3

The Commissioner of Official Languages recommends that the Minister of Industry create a support mechanism to encourage Canadian businesses to develop their capacity to operate and provide services in both official languages.